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THE SON AND THE SONS OF GOD: A STUDY IN ELEMENTS OF  
PAUL'S CHRISTOLOGICAL AND SOTERIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

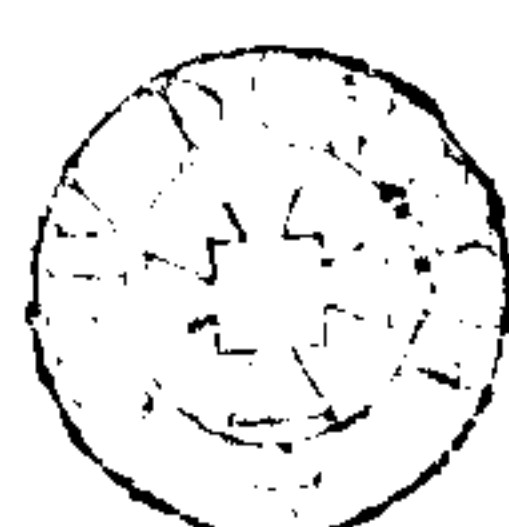
by  
Charles Arthur Wanamaker

Ph.D. Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Divinity

University of Durham

March 1980



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17 MAY 1984

## THE SON AND THE SONS OF GOD: A STUDY IN ELEMENTS OF

## PAUL'S CHRISTOLOGICAL AND SOTERIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

by Charles Arthur Wanamaker

This thesis examines Paul's use of the divine Sonship conception in order to discover its place and significance in his Christological and soteriological thought. Because Paul relates the divine Sonship idea both to Christ and to Christians, this thesis naturally divides into two main parts: Part one studies the divine Sonship of Christ, and part two investigates the divine sonship of Christians.

Our examination in part one reveals that Sonship characterizes Christ's relation with God at every stage of his existence from before he became a man through to his present position as universal sovereign. The divine Sonship which Paul attributes to Christ is of fundamental importance for understanding the unique roles which Christ plays in creation and redemption. In particular, Paul's soteriology is inconceivable without the supposition of the divine Sonship of Christ. Paul's own belief in the divine Sonship of the man Jesus of Nazareth arose through the revelation he received at his conversion and call. Because of this experience, the Son of God became the content of Paul's Gospel.

In part two we show that Paul's believer sonship conception was in continuity with his Jewish heritage and the teaching tradition associated with Jesus. By a careful examination of Gal. 3-4 and Rom. 8-9 we demonstrate that Paul attributed great significance to the idea of the divine sonship of Christians. This concept expresses the continuity between the present and future experience of salvation, while emphasizing its personal character. We also discover that believer sonship was capable of embracing a variety of other important aspects in Pauline theology.

When the two sides of divine Sonship are seen together, especially in their relationship to one another, the one theme of divine Sonship is seen to provide a very valuable perspective on Paul's Christological and soteriological thought.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Statement of Copyright . . . . .	iii
Preface . . . . .	x
Abbreviations . . . . .	xii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1

### PART ONE: THE SON OF GOD IN PAULINE THEOLOGY

CHAPTER II CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD IN PAUL: AN INTRODUCTION	5
A. <u>The Problem</u> . . . . .	5
B. <u>Statement of the Thesis of Part One</u> . . . . .	12
C. <u>The Approach to be Followed</u> . . . . .	13
CHAPTER III BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING	
PAUL'S SON OF GOD CHRISTOLOGY . . . . .	16
A. <u>Introduction</u> . . . . .	16
B. <u>Supposed Hellenistic Influence</u>	
<u>On Paul's Sonship Christology</u> . . . . .	17
1. Introduction to the Problem . . . . .	17
2. Son of God and the Imperial Cult . . . . .	18
3. Son of God and the Mystery Religions . . . . .	20
4. Son of God and <u>Theios Aner</u> . . . . .	24
5. Son of God and the Gnostic Redeemer . . . . .	29
6. Conclusions . . . . .	35
C. <u>The Jewish and Gospels Background</u>	
<u>Of Paul's Sonship Christology</u> . . . . .	35
1. Preliminary Considerations . . . . .	35
2. The Old Testament Background of	
The Son of God Designation . . . . .	38
3. The Palestinian Jewish Background	
Of the Son of God Designation . . . . .	42
4. Non-Messianic Divine Sonship	
In Palestinian Judaism . . . . .	47



	Page
5. The Historical Jesus and the Son of God Designation . . . . .	48
6. Hellenistic Jewish Thought and The Son of God Designation . . . . .	60
D. <u>Summary</u> . . . . .	65
CHAPTER IV THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD . . . . .	67
A. <u>The Revealing of the Son of God and the Content of Paul's Gospel: Gal. 1.15-16</u> . . . . .	67
1. Contextual Considerations . . . . .	68
2. The Meaning of ἀποκαλύψαι . . . . .	70
3. "God's Son" as the Content of The Revelation Given to Paul . . . . .	76
a. Some Possible Interpretations	
b. 2 Cor. 4.4-6 and "His Son" in Gal. 1.16	
4. The Son as the Content of the Gospel According to Gal. 1.16b . . . . .	87
B. <u>The Pauline Use of a Pre-Pauline Son of God Formula: Rom. 1.3-4</u> . . . . .	90
1. The Context of Rom. 1.3-4 . . . . .	91
2. The Gospel Concerning "God's Son" . . . . .	93
a. "Born from the Seed of David"	
b. "Appointed Son of God in Power"	
3. The Pre-Pauline Formula of Rom. 1.3b-4a And Paul's Use of it . . . . .	102
C. <u>"In the Gospel of His Son": Rom. 1.9</u> . . . . .	105
D. <u>"The Son of God who was Preached Among You": 2 Cor. 1.19</u> . . . . .	106
1. Contextual Considerations . . . . .	106
2. "The Son of God" who was Preached . . . . .	107
CHAPTER V THE SENDING AND THE COMING OF THE SON . . . . .	109
A. <u>The Sending of the Son: Gal. 4.4-5</u> . . . . .	109
1. The So-Called Sending Tradition . . . . .	111
a. The Thesis of E. Schweizer	
b. The Problem of the Pre- Pauline "Sending Formula"	
2. Contextual Survey . . . . .	116

	Page
3. The Sending of the Son at The "Fullness of Time" . . . . .	117
a. The "Fullness of Time"	
b. The Sending of the Son	
4. The Soteriological Significance of Gal. 4.4-5 . . . . .	124
a. Rom. 3.24-26 and 2 Cor. 5.18-21	
b. Sonship: the Basis of Representation	
B. <u>"God Sent his Own Son": Rom. 8.3-4</u> . . . . .	131
1. The Context of Rom. 8.3-4 . . . . .	132
2. The Purpose of the Sending of the Son . . . . .	135
3. The Problematic "in the Likeness of Sinful Flesh" . . . . .	137
C. <u>The Coming of the Son of God: Phil. 2.6-11</u> . . . . .	146
1. The Problem of the Context . . . . .	148
2. Phil. 2.6 . . . . .	151
a. The Attack on Pre-existence in Phil. 2.6-8	
b. "In the Form of God"	
c. "He Did Not Consider Equality With God a Thing to be Grasped"	
3. Phil. 2.7-8 . . . . .	164
4. Phil. 2.9-11 . . . . .	167
CHAPTER VI THE SAVING DEATH OF THE SON OF GOD . . . . .	171
A. <u>"The Son of God Who . . . Gave Himself for Me": Gal. 2.19-20</u> . . . . .	171
1. The Context . . . . .	172
2. Paul and the Son of God . . . . .	174
B. <u>"Reconciliation to God through the Death of His Son": Rom. 5.8-10</u> . . . . .	178
1. The Context . . . . .	180
2. Rom. 5.9-10 . . . . .	182
C. <u>"God Did Not Spare His Own Son . . .": Rom. 8.32</u> . . . . .	185
D. <u>"The Son of God's Love": Col. 1.13-20</u> . . . . .	188
1. Col. 1.13b-14 . . . . .	191
2. Col. 1.15-20 . . . . .	193
CHAPTER VII THE SON OF GOD IN THE PRESENT AND IN THE FUTURE . . . . .	199
A. <u>"Called to Fellowship with God's Son": 1 Cor. 1.9</u> . . . . .	200

	Page
B. <u>"The Spirit of God's Son": Gal. 4.6 . . . . .</u>	201
1. The Relationship of Christ and the Spirit . . .	202
2. The Spirit and the Son in Gal. 4.6 . . . . .	207
C. <u>"Conformity to the Image of God's Son: Rom. 8.29-30</u>	207
1. The Present Significance of "Being Conformed to the Image of God's Son" . . . . .	209
2. The Future Significance of "Being Conformed to the Image of God's Son" . . . . .	212
D. <u>"Waiting for God's Son from Heaven": 1 Thess. 1.9-10 . . . . .</u>	216
1. 1 Thess. 1.9-10 as a Piece of Tradition . . .	217
2. The "Parousia" of the Son of God . . . . .	224
E. <u>"The Subjection of the Son To God": 1 Cor. 15.23-28 . . . . .</u>	226
1. The Context . . . . .	226
2. The Question of Tradition . . . . .	228
3. 1 Cor. 15.23-24 . . . . .	230
4. 1 Cor. 15.25-28 . . . . .	233
F. Conclusion to Part One . . . . .	239

## PART TWO: THE SONS OF GOD IN PAULINE THEOLOGY

CHAPTER VIII	BELIEVERS, THE SONS OF GOD: AN INTRODUCTION	244
CHAPTER IX	THE BACKGROUND TO PAUL'S	
	BELIEVER SONSHIP CONCEPTION . . . . .	246
A.	<u>The Old Testament . . . . .</u>	246
B.	<u>Post-Old Testament Judaism . . . . .</u>	255
1.	Palestinian Jewish Writings (Non-Rabbinic) . . .	255
a.	Tobit 13.4-5	
b.	Jubilees 1.22ff.	
c.	Wisdom of ben Sirach (Hebrew)	
d.	Psalms of Solomon	
2.	Hellenistic Judaism . . . . .	262
a.	Wisdom of ben Sirach (Greek)	
b.	3 Maccabees	
c.	Wisdom of Solomon	
d.	Sibylline Oracles	
e.	Philo	
3.	Rabbinic Judaism . . . . .	272



	Page
C. <u>The Synoptic Gospels</u> . . . . .	278
1. The Father Material in the Synoptic Gospels	280
2. The Fatherhood of God in The Teaching of Jesus . . . . .	284
3. The Sons of God in the Synoptic Tradition .	292
CHAPTER X      GALATIANS AND PAUL'S USE OF THE BELIEVER SONSHIP IDEA . . . . .	295
A. <u>Introduction</u> . . . . .	295
B. <u>Paul's Opponents and the "Other Gospel"</u> . . . .	296
C. <u>The Composition and Argument of Galatians</u> . . .	303
1. The Composition of Galatians According to H.D. Betz . . . . .	303
2. The Argument of Galatians . . . . .	306
3. The Argument of Gal. 3.1ff. . . . .	309
D. <u>The Theme of Believer</u> <u>Sonship in Gal. 3.26-29</u> . . . . .	318
1. The Reasons for the Introduction of Believer Sonship in Gal. 3.26 . . . . .	319
2. Gal. 3.26 . . . . .	321
3. Gal. 3.27 . . . . .	326
4. Gal. 3.28-29 . . . . .	333
E. <u>The Theme of Believer Sonship</u> <u>In Gal. 4.1-7</u> . . . . .	336
1. Adoptive Sonship in Gal. 4.5 . . . . .	338
2. Sonship and the Spirit of The Son in Gal. 4.6 . . . . .	343
3. Sonship and Heirship in Gal. 4.7 . . . . .	349
CHAPTER XI      ROMANS AND PAUL'S USE OF THE BELIEVER SONSHIP IDEA . . . . .	353
A. <u>Introduction</u> . . . . .	353
B. <u>The Purpose and Character of Romans</u> . . . . .	354
C. <u>The Structure of the Argument of Romans</u> . . . .	356
D. <u>The Divine Sonship of the People of God in Rom. 9</u>	363
E. <u>The Context of Sonship in Rom. 8</u> . . . . .	368
F. <u>The Present Experience of Sonship: Rom. 8.12-17</u>	372
1. Rom. 8.12-13 . . . . .	372
2. Rom. 8.14 . . . . .	375
3. Rom. 8.15 . . . . .	378
4. Rom. 8.16 . . . . .	385

	Page
5. Rom. 8.17 . . . . .	387
G. <u>Sonship and the Future: Rom. 8.18-30</u> . . . . .	390
1. The Structure of Rom. 8.18-27 . . . . .	391
2. Rom. 8.18 . . . . .	393
3. Rom. 8.19-21 . . . . .	395
4. Rom. 8.22-25 . . . . .	398
5. Rom. 8.26-28 . . . . .	404
6. Rom. 8.29-30 . . . . .	405
H. <u>Conclusion to Part Two</u> . . . . .	408
CHAPTER XII CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	412
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	414



## PREFACE

This thesis, like many others, has a long pre-history. The basic theme of this work was suggested to me by my friend Dr. Curtis McKnight as long ago as 1972, though at that time I was completing an M.A. in history at the University of Illinois and had no thoughts of switching to the study of the New Testament. Dr. McKnight suggested that the concept of sonship and the related idea of inheritance might be an integrating theme within Biblical thought, especially in the thought of Paul. Several years later, after I had changed over to theological studies, I found myself casting around for a thesis topic which would hold my attention for three or four years and would have some value for the theological task of the contemporary church. Because the Fatherhood of God has played an important part in Christian thinking over the centuries, I decided to pursue the theme of the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of believers with special reference to Paul.

This thesis is the fruit of my studies, though I must hasten to say that my original project has undergone several revisions since its conception. The most significant change was required by the nature of the evidence in Paul. It became clear to me that the divine sonship of believers in Paul could not be understood apart from the divine Sonship of Christ. For this reason, I have investigated the two strands of the divine Sonship in Paul in an effort to understand the one theme of divine Sonship. The reader must judge for himself the value of this investigation and the contribution it makes to theological studies.

It remains for me to express my thanks and appreciation to those without whose help this work would never have been completed. First, I must express my thanks and appreciation to my supervisor, the Reverend Professor C.K. Barrett. He has challenged and guided me at every stage of my research and writing through his incisive criticism and suggestions and has given of his time and energy far beyond what might reasonably have been expected. Second, within the University of Durham there are a whole host of people who have

contributed to my work either directly or indirectly. My special thanks go to the staff of the library who have helped in every way possible to expedite my work. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the minister and people of Waddington Street United Reformed Church who have become like mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters to my wife and myself during our stay in Great Britain. This thesis could not have been completed without the generous financial support of various members of my wife's family and of my own family, as well as the special financial help of Dr. and Mrs. Curtis McKnight, Mr. and Mrs. Ron Simkins, and Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Sauer all of whom made genuine sacrifices to help. I would also like to express my appreciation to Mrs. Kathy Percy and Mr. and Mrs. Ben Witherington for their help in the production of the final draft of this thesis.

But all the debts I have accumulated in the research and writing of this thesis, and they are great indeed, are as nothing when compared to what I owe my wife, Pam. She has typed two difficult drafts of this thesis over the past several years while being a mother to our two small children. But more than this she has been a constant source of love and encouragement throughout my academic studies. Whatever I have achieved over the last twelve years are as much her achievements as they are mine. It is to Pam that this thesis is dedicated in love and gratitude.



## ABBREVIATIONS

Arndt-Gingrich	<u>A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.</u> By W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich (1957).
<u>BJRL</u>	<u>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.</u>
Blass-Debrunner-Funk	<u>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.</u> By F. Blass and A. Debrunner. Trans. and Revised by R.W. Funk (1961).
<u>BZ</u>	<u>Biblische Zeitschrift.</u>
<u>CBQ</u>	<u>Catholic Biblical Quarterly.</u>
<u>ERAW</u>	<u>Essays on Religion and the Ancient World.</u> Vol. 1-2, ed. by Z. Steward (1972).
<u>ET</u>	<u>Expository Times.</u>
<u>Ev Th</u>	<u>Evangelische Theologie.</u>
<u>HTR</u>	<u>Harvard Theological Review.</u>
<u>JBL</u>	<u>Journal of Biblical Literature.</u>
<u>JSNT</u>	<u>Journal for the Study of the New Testament.</u>
<u>JTC</u>	<u>Journal of Theology and Church.</u>
<u>JTS</u>	<u>Journal of Theological Studies.</u>
Liddell-Scott	<u>A Greek-English Lexicon.</u> By H.G. Liddell and R. Scott. Revised and Augmented by H.S. Jones. With a Supplement ed. by E.A. Barber (1968).
<u>NT</u>	<u>Novum Testamentum.</u>
<u>NTS</u>	<u>New Testament Studies.</u>
<u>RAC</u>	<u>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</u> (1950- ).
<u>RB</u>	<u>Revue Biblique.</u>

<u>RGG</u>	<u>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.</u> Vol. 1-6. 3rd ed. (1957-1965).
<u>RSR</u>	<u>Recherches de Science Religieuse.</u>
Strack-Billerbeck	<u>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus</u> <u>Talmud und Midrash.</u> Vol. 1-5. By H.L. Strack and P. Billerbeck (1922-1956).
<u>SJT</u>	<u>Scottish Journal of Theology.</u>
<u>ST</u>	<u>Studia Theologica.</u>
<u>TDNT</u>	<u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testa-</u> <u>ment.</u> Vol. 1-9. Ed. by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Trans. by G. W. Bromily (1964-1974).
<u>TLZ</u>	<u>Theologische Literaturzeitung.</u>
<u>TZ</u>	<u>Theologische Zeitschrift.</u>
<u>ZAW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für die Altestamentliche</u> <u>Wissenschaft.</u>
<u>ZNW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche</u> <u>Wissenschaft.</u>
<u>ZTK</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.</u>

All other abbreviations are customary or self-explanatory.

## CHAPTER I

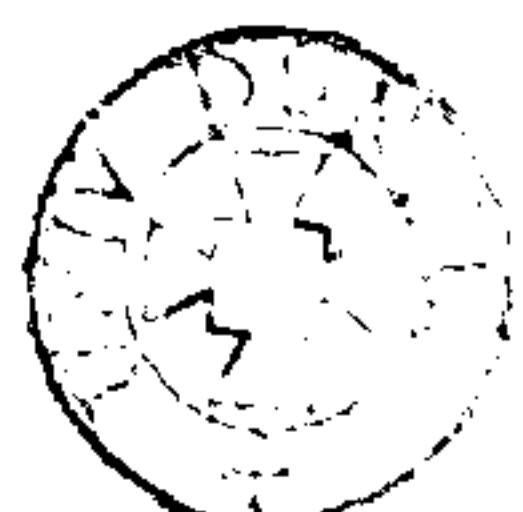
### INTRODUCTION

The theological thought of the apostle Paul, as preserved in his extant letters,<sup>1</sup> reveals a man who understood his theological task in an essentially practical manner. His theological thought, at least as it has been preserved for us, is neither abstract nor esoteric; it was intended to serve the church and the Lord of the church, Jesus Christ. Even the most speculative of theological statements, like Phil. 2.6-11 and Col. 1.15-20, are used by Paul in order to make important "practical" theological points to his readers. The occasional nature of Paul's theological writings means that his letters may not be approached as though they were systematic statements of his theology, not even Romans, as we shall see. Nevertheless, the question of the center or key to Paul's theology has long been a matter of interest and of debate. The recent publication of E.P. Sanders' book, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, has once again served to draw attention to this problem of crucial importance for understanding the driving force (or forces) of Paul's theological thought. The work of Sanders itself represents one of the most recent frontal attacks upon the traditional Protestant view that the center of Pauline theology is to be found in the "justification of the ungodly through faith."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this thesis we consider the following letters to be authentic Pauline writings: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. In our view W.G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament (1975<sup>2</sup>), pp. 255-350 provides sufficient evidence for accepting the authenticity of all nine of these letters. The case for the Pauline authorship of Ephesians is more problematic. For this reason we have chosen not to treat the Sonship material in Ephesians.

<sup>2</sup> See E.P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion (1977), pp. 434ff. Sanders argues that the criticisms of Albert Schweitzer against "justification by faith" being the center of Pauline theology have never been effectively countered. Taking a lead from Schweitzer he proposes that all of Paul's thought is to be explained from: 1) the Lordship of Christ, his saving work, and his impending return; and 2) Paul's sense of calling





We do not wish to enter into the debate about the specific center of Pauline thought, for his complex thought is not easily organized around any single all-embracing category from which all other thoughts may be derived.<sup>1</sup> Rather we would suggest that the heart of Paul's theology concerns three overarching and interconnected themes: God, Christ, and salvation. This thesis attempts to examine one focal point in Paul's thought where these three overarching themes come together, namely in the divine Sonship conception. Paul believed that God sent his Son into human existence in order that men might receive adoptive sonship (Gal. 4.4-5). Since in our view, neither Christological Sonship nor believer sonship in Paul has received adequate attention from scholars, let alone the interconnection of the two, we shall endeavor in this thesis to provide an exegetical examination of the relevant Pauline material as well as a study of the background of both types of Sonship.

This thesis naturally divides into two principal parts. In part one of the thesis the divine Sonship of Christ will be examined in order to determine its historical background and its place in the thought of Paul. In part two of the thesis the divine sonship of believers will be treated in an effort to discover its historical background and its significance for Paul. It is unnecessary to introduce the two parts of the thesis further at this point since each part has its own introductory chapter setting out the nature of the investigation to be undertaken and the method to be followed. However, two important points need to be borne in mind by the reader. First, although we have divided the thesis into two parts and have discussed the somewhat different backgrounds to the two types of Sonship separately, Sonship for Paul was an integrating theme. If Paul portrays

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to be the apostle to the Gentiles. For an example of the acrimonious character of the debate over whether "justification by faith" is the center of Pauline thought see E. Käsemann, "Justification and Salvation History in the Epistle to the Romans," Perspectives on Paul (1971), pp. 60-78.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. G. Hasel, New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate (1978), p. 216.

believers as the sons of God, it is primarily because they have been related to God as sons through the saving death of the unique Son of God to whose Sonship they are being conformed. Thus in this thesis we are not discussing two tangential themes but a single theme with two foci. Secondly, this thesis is written in the belief that Paul speaks to Christians of every age and that it is the task of the Christian exegete to uncover the meaning of Paul in its historical setting so that it may better be understood and applied in the present.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For an excellent treatment of the relation between New Testament studies and the Church see A.J.M. Wedderburn, "The New Testament as the Church's Book?" SJT 31 (1978), pp. 23-40.

PART ONE

THE SON OF GOD IN PAULINE THEOLOGY



## CHAPTER II

### CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD IN PAUL: AN INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Problem

The Christological designation of Christ as "Son of God," "his Son" (i.e., God's), and the absolute form "the Son" are relatively rare in the Pauline letters. Only sixteen instances occur where the term "Son" is predicated of Jesus in the nine letters of Paul being considered authentic for the purposes of this thesis.<sup>1</sup> To this figure should be added the four definite occasions on which God is described as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" since such statements clearly imply Christ's Sonship.<sup>2</sup> But even with this additional material the number of references in Paul to Christ's Sonship is minuscule in comparison with the number of occasions on which the terms "Lord" and "Christ" occur. Lord is used slightly over 200 times, though many of these are found in Old Testament quotations where their main referent is often God "the Father." The title "Christ" is used somewhat over 300 times, but as is well-known, for the most part the titular character of the term "Christ" is largely in the background. Such statistics, however, must not deceive us into thinking that the Christological Son of God idea is of little importance in Paul. The significance of an idea is determined more by how and why it is used than by how often (or seldom) it is used.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Rom. 1.3, 4, 9; 5.10; 8.3, 29, 32; 1 Cor. 1.9; 15.28; 2 Cor. 1.19; Gal. 1.16; 2.20; 4.4, 6; Col. 1.13; and 1 Thess. 1.10.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rom. 15.6; 2 Cor. 1.3; 11.31, and Col. 1.3. These four texts do not make significant theological contributions, but they do attest the importance of Christ's divine Sonship in the thought of Paul. In certain other passages it looks as though the term Father is used of God in relationship to Christ, but a certain amount of ambiguity exists owing to Paul's common use of Father in an absolute sense. Cf. Rom. 6.4; 1 Cor. 8.6; 15.24; Gal. 1.1; Phil. 2.11; and Col. 1.3.

<sup>3</sup>A remark of W.G. Kümmel, The Theology of the New Testament According to Its Major Witnesses: Jesus—Paul—John (1973), p. 139 is pertinent at this point. He says in another connection: "The absence of certain ideas or their merely incidental mention by no means should be taken to mean that Paul considered these ideas unimportant, or that he



Surprisingly, Paul's designation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God has never received widespread attention by modern New Testament researchers and to our knowledge no thorough exegetical treatment of all of the Sonship passages exists. It is true that certain texts containing the Son of God terminology, especially Rom. 1.3-4;<sup>1</sup> 8.3; Gal. 4.4-5; Phil. 2.5-11, and Col. 1.13-20, have undergone intensive examination. The reason for this is not the occurrence of the Son of God idea itself, but the fact that these passages are thought to contain pre-Pauline traditions. In fact, R.H. Fuller has observed regarding Pauline Christology in general: "Most NT Christologies in their chapter on Paul really discuss the pre-Pauline tradition!"<sup>2</sup>

The potential importance of Paul's designation of Christ as the Son of God has often been recognized, but with two principal exceptions little detailed exegetical work has been carried out, specifically on the themes of Christological Sonship in Paul. W. Bousset, in concluding his, in many respects dated, discussion of the "Kyrios Christos" in Pauline thought, raised the question of how Paul dealt with the relationship between God and Christ when Christ as Lord was receiving the worship properly due only to the one true God.<sup>3</sup> Bousset believed that Paul sought to overcome this apparent problem by predicating the title υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ to Christ. According to him, the title "Son of God" solved the problem of the relation between God and Christ the Lord in the following way: "On the one hand, as the Son he [the Lord] stands close by the side of the Father, yet on the other hand he is still a being in his own right, separate from

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perhaps deliberately rejected them. Rather, the exegete must carefully note the historical situation out of which and to which the individual trains of thought are written, and must also be open to the possibility that individual views of Paul changed in the context of his activity." Cf. F.J. Leenhardt The Epistle to the Romans (1961), p. 23.

<sup>1</sup>M. Hengel, The Son of God: The Origin of Christology and the History of Jewish-Hellenistic Religion (1976), p. 59 claims of Rom. 1.3f. that "in recent years, more has been written about this than about any other New Testament text." This is probably hyperbole, whether he intended it as such or not. Nevertheless, the recent bibliography on Rom. 1.3f. is massive.

<sup>2</sup>R.H. Fuller, "Review of Der leidende Apostel und sein Herr by E. Güttgemanns," JBL 86 (1967), p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>W. Bousset, Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus (1970), pp. 205-209.



the Father."<sup>1</sup> This theological explanation of Paul's Son of God terminology is of particular interest because it is one of the few attempts to explicate the significance of the title in Paul's wider Christological thought. Unfortunately, Bousset did not ground his reflections on careful exegesis of the Son of God passages, and it is certainly not clear from Paul that the cultic worship of the Lord was the problem necessitating his use of the Sonship language.

In an essay devoted to Paul's understanding of Christ, Otto Michel made several interesting suggestions regarding the significance of the term Son of God as long ago as the 1930's. He observed that the designation Son

ist das Wort, das sowohl die Würde des erhöhten (Gal. 1.16) als auch das Sein des geschichtlichen Jesus (Rm 5.10) umfasst, das auf den vorgeschichtlichen Christus angewandt werden kann (Rm 8.3) und das letzten Endes auch in der Endzeit gilt, bevor Gott alles in allem ist (1 Cor. 15.28).<sup>2</sup>

Apart from its ability to be appropriately employed in reference to every phase of Christ's existence, he also saw a profound theological significance for the word "Son": "In dies Wort legt Paulus alles hinein, die völlige Einheit mit dem Vater und seine Unterordnung, so dass es die zutreffendste und tiefste Bezeichnung ist, die Paulus dem Christus geben kann."<sup>3</sup> As with Bousset, these important observations are not supported with careful exegesis, and thus they exist as nothing more than a potential thesis requiring careful proof.

Among English speaking authors, Vincent Taylor has offered several insights of possible importance. Noting the disparity in frequency between the title "Lord" and the designation "Son of God" he maintains that the title "Lord" is essentially derived from the language of worship and is uttered by those who believe, while the language of Sonship is employed by Paul when he wishes to make explicit what the Lordship terminology means. For this reason the Sonship language frequently occurs where Paul's teaching (or preaching) intention predominates (e.g. Rom. 1.3-4, 9; Gal. 2.20; 2 Cor. 1.19).<sup>4</sup> In a number of passages Taylor recognizes a different interest at work.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 208. Cf. Kümmel, Theology, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> O. Michel, "Der Christus des Paulus," ZNW 32 (1933), p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> V. Taylor, The Person of Christ in the New Testament (1958), pp. 44-46. See also his earlier work The Names of Jesus (1953), pp. 52, 57-58.



Oftentimes Paul utilizes the Sonship terminology precisely where "Jesus Christ is mentioned over against God."<sup>1</sup> Taylor places such passages as Rom. 5.10; 8.3, 29; 1 Cor. 15.28; Gal. 1.16; 4.4,6; and 1 Thess. 1.10 in this category, and goes on to say, "It is manifestly his [Paul's] intention to use these names ['the Son' and 'his Son'] in defining Christ's relation to God."<sup>2</sup> The most important observation of Taylor comes in his realization that the Sonship language requires consideration with regard to the wider features of Paul's theology. Thus he maintains:

We must continue the inquiry as far as we can in Pauline terms. If from this standpoint, we ask what is the content of the Sonship he describes, there can be no doubt that it is appreciated best by considering his teaching concerning the relationship of Christ to man, to the universe, to the Spirit, and to God. The Sonship is estimated best in terms of its function.<sup>3</sup>

The principal shortcoming of Taylor's work, like that of Bousset and Michel, lies in his failure to provide an exegetical basis for his claims. To his credit, however, he sees clearly the need to relate Paul's Son of God conception to the apostle's theology as a whole and favors a functional view of it rather than a merely titular conception.

In spite of the potential significance of Paul's references to Christ as the Son of God only two works give any pretense of treating the Son of God material in Paul in any detail. The earlier of these two works, Werner Kramer's Christ, Lord, Son of God, is an investigation into the three most important traditional Christological titles found in Paul: Christ, Lord, and Son of God. Kramer operates on the commonly held assumption that the Pauline letters have pre-Pauline formulas embedded in them and that these formulas can be isolated on the basis of their literary form.<sup>4</sup> With respect to the Son of God

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<sup>1</sup>Taylor, Person of Christ, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 47. Cf. L. Cerfaux, Christ in the Theology of St. Paul (1959), pp. 439, 449f.

<sup>3</sup>Taylor, Person of Christ, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup>W. Kramer, Christ, Lord, Son of God (1966), pp. 126-127 summarizes his tradition-historical findings in this way: "Our examination of the Christological titles has led to the happy discovery that within the pre-Pauline material each of the principal titles is set in a formula which is distinguishable by its literary form. The statements contained in these formulae mark the contours of the early Christian understanding of the terms Christ, Lord, and Son of God. They show how these titles



title, Kramer discovers three different types of formulas. He characterizes the first as an "adoption" formula, finding its existence preserved in Rom. 1.3b-4.<sup>1</sup> A second type he terms a "sending" formula. He thinks that Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3 are examples of this formula.<sup>2</sup> Closely related to the "sending" formula is what he calls the "giving up" formula typified by Rom. 8.32 and Gal. 2.20.<sup>3</sup> Paul's incorporation of these Sonship formulas into his letters, along with the additional instances where he introduces the Sonship title on his own, reveal that the title and the ideas associated with it were of "relatively minor importance" for Paul, according to Kramer.<sup>4</sup> He further claims that no particular themes emerge in special connection with the "Son of God" title and that the title nowhere influences the theological argument of the letters. Kramer does concede, however, that Paul's primary motive for introducing the "Son of God" title was that it "suggests the Son's solidarity with God," thereby indicating "the very close relationship between

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were first associated, before passing into the stream of Christian tradition." For a penetrating criticism of Kramer's work see M. Hengel, "Christologie und neutestamentliche Chronologie," Neues Testament und Geschichte: Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament (1970), pp. 53-57. He rightly points to the fundamental problem of Kramer's entire approach when he claims: "So sehr das Bemühen, einzelne Titel, Formeln und Wendungen zunächst isoliert zu betrachten, anzuerkennen ist und der Verfasser hier gründliche Arbeit geleistet hat, führt der Versuch, diese 'atomisierten' Aussagen auf die Überlieferung der 'vorpaulinischen Gemeinden' zurückzuprojizieren, dazu, dass die christologische Entwicklung als Ganzes unverständlich wird. Die einzelne christologische Formel ist ja immer nur eine isolierte Chiffre, hinter der in den urchristlichen Gemeinden ein lebendiges, anschauliches Verständnis des Heilsgeschehens im Sinne der endzeitlichen Offenbarung Gottes durch seinen Christus stand. Nicht die isolierte Betrachtung der einzelnen christologischen Chiffren, sondern ihre Zusammenschau müsste das letzte Ziel einer sinnvollen Darstellung der urchristlichen Christologie sein. Hinzu kommt, dass die vermutete vorpaulinische, christologische produktive 'heidenchristliche Gemeinde' eine Fiktion darstellt" (p. 56). Cf. H. Balz, Methodische Probleme der neutestamentlichen Christologie (1967), pp. 36-40.

<sup>1</sup>Kramer, Christ, pp. 108-111.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 111-115.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-119. The "giving up" formula and the "sending" formula are compared on pp. 119-123.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 189. Cf. P. Pokorný, Der Gottessohn: Literarische Übersicht und Fragestellung (1971), p. 37, and H. Balz, Heilsvertrauen und Welterfahrung (1971), pp. 110-111, n. 246.



the bearer of salvation and God himself."<sup>1</sup>

Kramer's approach to the Son of God material in Paul is inadequate and misleading. The fundamental problems with his treatment are his assumption that the term "Son of God" is exclusively a title in Paul which may therefore be treated in isolation from the apostle's total Christology and his claim that the title has no real importance for Paul. By treating the Son of God statements in isolation from their original contexts in Paul's letters and by failing to place them in the apostle's wider Christological thought, Kramer fails to grasp the importance of the Father-Son relation and its implications in Pauline thought as a whole, even though he is forced to admit that the title "Son" implies the close relationship between the salvation bearer and God himself. Such a thought can hardly be termed unimportant since the relationship of Christ to God was a matter of paramount importance in early Christianity. The ascription of the title "Lord" to the risen Christ and the application of Old Testament texts to Christ which refer to God show, to some extent, just how far the earliest disciples were prepared to go in identifying Christ with God. Yet another problem with Kramer's treatment of Christ's Sonship in Paul is his failure to deal with the origin of the non-Messianic Son of God idea which has often obscured for him the actual meaning and implications of the Sonship idea in Paul.<sup>2</sup>

The second and more detailed study of the Son of God material in Paul is found in Josef Blank's Paulus und Jesus.<sup>3</sup> He devotes over fifty pages to a treatment of the Son of God passages in Paul under three primary headings: 1) "Der Horizont der messianischen Inthronisation," 2) "Der Sohn und die Söhne," and 3) "Der soteriologische Horizont." His work represents an attempt to overcome the meager results of Kramer, while avoiding the entrapment of a completely systematic approach. He defines his own purpose in this way:

Was also im Folgenden versucht werden soll, ist die Erhellung der Sohn-Gottes-Bezeichnung aus den verschiedenen Traditions- und Interpretations-Horizonten heraus, in denen sie bei Paulus auftaucht. Es wird sich zeigen, dass die

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<sup>1</sup>Kramer, Christ, pp. 185-186, 189.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Balz, Methodische Probleme, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>J. Blank, Paulus und Jesus: Eine theologische Grundlegung (1968).



Bezeichnung so eindeutig und farblos nicht ist, wie vielfach angenommen.<sup>1</sup>

Under the first heading, "the aspect of Messianic Inthronization," he focuses his primary attention on Rom. 1.3-4, but he also touches on 1 Cor. 15.28 and 1 Thess. 1.9-10, understanding them all within the thought circle of the Messianic Son of God tradition. With the second heading, "the Son and the Sons," he examines Gal. 4.4-7 and Rom. 8.14-15, supplementing this work with a treatment of Gal. 3.7, 3.26-29; Rom. 8.29; 9.6ff.; and 1 Cor. 1.9. Under his final heading, "the Soteriological aspect," he studies Rom. 5.10; 8.3-4; 8.32; and Gal. 2.20. Since Blank's work is primarily exegetical in nature, it is unnecessary to go into details at present. His work will be considered in our own exegesis of the Sonship passages. The important factor for the time being is the conclusion to which Blank comes. He maintains:

Die Abgrenzung der verschiedenen Interpretations-Horizonte scheint sich als sachlich angemessen bewährt zu haben. Steht bei dem ersten Gedankenkreis hauptsächlich der Auferstandene und Erhöhte im Blickfeld, so kommt beim zweiten der heilsgeschichtliche Bezugspunkt hinzu und auch schon eine deutliche Traditionslinie zum 'Sohnesbewusstsein' des irdischen Jesus. Im dritten Gedankenkreis spielt das Sendungsmotiv eine gewisse Rolle, aber der eigentliche Schwerpunkt dürfte hier beim Gekreuzigten liegen. In diesem Zusammenhang bekommt die Sohn-Gottes-Bezeichnung einen unüberhörbar eigenen Klang, sofern seine Hingabe in den Tod die höchste Liebesoffenbarung Gottes ist . . . . Was Jesus als Sohn Gottes ist, das erfährt man nicht bei der Frage nach einem bestimmten 'Titel', sondern in entscheidender Weise doch erst dann, wenn man ihm als der Liebesoffenbarung Gottes für uns begegnet. Das Kreuz als der Ort, an dem Gottes Liebe in der Welt als die letzte Wirklichkeit aufgerichtet wurde, ist auch der Ort, wo der Sohn Gottes wahrhaft erkannt wird.<sup>2</sup>

He proceeds to suggest that the way in which Christology and the saving act of Christ are brought together in the Sonship passages by Paul is indicative of the unity of Paul's Christology and soteriology, the decisive beginning point of his thought.<sup>3</sup>

Blank's treatment of the Son of God material in Paul is not without several problems. In the first place, he sometimes forgets

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 301-302.



that the so-called "Traditions-Horizonte" must not be allowed to be determinative for Paul's understanding. This problem is particularly present in his discussion of Messianic enthronization because Messianic Sonship is not an adequate category for understanding the Son of God idea in Pauline thought. A second problem is that he has not considered the significance of the Son of God designation in relation to Paul's broader Christological reflection, though he certainly has shown an important connection between Paul's Christology and soteriology. Finally, it is very doubtful whether the "Interpretations-Horizonte" actually existed as separate entities in Paul's mind, as Blank implies. If Blank were correct, it would suggest that Paul had three separate Son of God Christologies or at least a threefold Son of God Christology.

A complete survey of literature treating the question of Paul's Son of God conception could be extended to include a number of other works,<sup>1</sup> but the principal problems of those which we have discussed already recur in varying degrees in virtually every other treatment of the Christological Son of God theme in Paul. Invariably one of two things seems to happen: either the discussions fail to take account of Paul's understanding of Christ as the Son of God in the context of his wider Christology and soteriology, resulting in only a partial understanding, or the works provide an insufficient exegetical basis for the broad conclusions which they offer.

#### B. Statement of the Thesis of Part One

In light of the situation which prevails regarding the scholarly examination of Paul's Son of God thought, what is required is an exegetically based examination of all of the Son of God passages in Paul which will seek to discover the meaning and significance of the Son of God idea within Paul's Theocentric, Christocentric, and

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<sup>1</sup> Among the more important of these treatments are Kümmel, Theology, pp. 151-172; H.N. Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of his Theology (1975), pp. 68-78; R. Schnackenburg, "Christologie des Neuen Testament," Das Christuserignis, Mysterium Salutis, III/1 (1970), pp. 309-337; and W. Thüsing, Per Christum in Deum (1965<sup>2</sup>), pp. 116-150. Also of great importance is S. Kim, An Exposition of Paul's Gospel in the Light of the Damascus Christophany, Manchester Ph.D. (1977). (This work is to be published in Germany in the series "Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums," edited by O. Michel, M. Hengel, and O. Betz.)



soteriological thought. It is our contention that Paul's designation of Christ as God's Son is of fundamental significance for understanding his theology because it is an expression of the profound relation between Christ and God without which the Christological and soteriological thought of the apostle remains incomprehensible. Michel was not too wide of the mark when he said of the designation "Son" "es die zutreffendeste und tiefste Bezeichnung ist, die Paulus dem Christus geben kann." Neither was Taylor far off the mark when he maintained that for Paul the content of Christ's Sonship is closely connected with his relationship "to man, to the universe, to the Spirit, and to God" and thus that "Sonship is estimated best in terms of its function."

### C. The Approach to be Followed

Even a very cursory examination of the Christological Son of God passages in Paul reveals a wide range of themes to which the Sonship idea is related. It would be possible to abstract the principal themes from the various Sonship texts and then employ them to organize the actual discussion of Sonship in a systematic way. In writing a monograph for publication this approach might well be favored. But such a procedure has several inherent dangers. It tends to fragment the thought of texts which originally stood as organic wholes, obscuring the interconnection of various themes related to the one theme under discussion. The complexity of Pauline thought and argumentation in its literary setting (and often its historical setting) also tends to be ignored. Another danger is that the abstracted categories are frequently utilized in a Procrustean fashion when details resist easy classification or fit into several classifications. In the end, such an approach treats Paul as though he had written systematic theology or a dogmatics, instead of occasional letters in which various theological themes and conceptions serve differing purposes arising from the occasions of the writings.

In an effort to listen to Paul as faithfully as possible, we have chosen a different approach. It is in ways less exciting and requires patience on the part of the reader because it makes for a slower development of the themes associated with Sonship, and on many occasions it leads to discussions which may seem to move away from the specific topic of Sonship. This latter point, however, is a

strength from our perspective, for it helps us to see Sonship in the wider context of Pauline thought. Specifically, we propose to exegete the relevant Pauline texts as whole units in order to determine how Christ's Sonship is used by Paul and thereby to ascertain its significance in the various contexts in which it occurs. This in turn will aid us in understanding its place in the apostle's wider theological thought. Only when we have completed our exegesis will an attempt be made to offer a more systematic statement about the meaning and significance of Sonship for Pauline theology, but this will arise out of the exegesis rather than dominate it.

Having rejected a purely thematic approach for examining the Christological Sonship theme in Paul, it will nevertheless prove helpful to group the various Sonship texts under several different headings suggested by the passages themselves. This will provide a basic organization for the chapters which follow without dictating the actual exegesis of the passages or foreclosing on the possibility of some texts relating to other categories as well.

On several occasions Paul identifies the Son of God as the content of his Gospel: Gal. 1.15-16; Rom. 1.1-4, 9; and 2 Cor. 1.19. Although these texts cannot be fully appreciated or understood without examining the other Son of God passages, they do center on a single theme which provides the basis for examining them together in a separate chapter. We hope to demonstrate that the Son of God, as the content of the Gospel, represents a fundamental conception of Pauline thought.

Another series of three passages which may conveniently be discussed together center on the coming of the Son of God into the world: Gal. 4.4-5; Rom. 8.3-4; and Phil. 2.6-11.<sup>1</sup> The first two texts are commonly referred to as "sending formulas" because they state that God sent his Son into the world for a saving purpose. These are often said to derive from a pre-Pauline "sending tradition," but we hope to show the doubtfulness of this hypothesis or at least the inadequacy of the evidence which is normally adduced for it. Since several of the other Sonship passages are reputed to be traditional as well, we shall consider this question with respect

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<sup>1</sup>The term "Son" does not occur in Phil. 2.6-11, but there are sound reasons for numbering it among the Son of God texts, as we shall see.



to those texts where the issue arises. While Gal. 4.4 and Rom. 8.3 seem to presuppose the pre-existence of the Son of God, Phil. 2.6-11 provides very strong evidence for the pre-existence of the Son of God. Moreover we will argue that pre-existence was closely tied to the theme of Sonship. The Philippians text goes beyond the other two in another important respect: It takes up the idea of the present position of the Son as Lord, a conception which will also be discussed in connection with Rom. 1.1-4.

Closely related to the three passages just discussed are a group of texts which refer to the death of the Son of God on man's behalf: Rom. 5.8-10; 8.32; Gal. 2.20; and Col. 1.13-20. These will be treated in a single chapter, though it will be seen that the Colossians text stands apart from the others because it leads into one of Paul's most profound cosmological statements concerning Christ, a statement which stands under the Sonship theme.

Three further passages are particularly interested in the Son's relationship to those who believe: Gal. 4.6; 1 Cor. 1.9; and Rom. 8.29.<sup>1</sup> Rom. 8.29 also has an important connection with 1 Thess. 1.9-10 and 1 Cor. 15.24-28 because all three of these texts relate to the theme of the Son and the eschaton. The five passages mentioned in this paragraph will be treated under the heading "The Son of God in the Present and in the Future," bringing to a conclusion our exegesis of the Christological Sonship material.

Before entering into our exegesis of the Sonship material in the letters of Paul, however, it is necessary to consider an important preliminary matter. The origins of Christological Sonship have long been debated by scholars. For this reason we propose to examine the background for Paul's Christological Son of God idea in order to lay to rest a number of unsupported hypotheses and to indicate the most probable factors lying behind Paul's understanding of Christ as the Son of God.

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<sup>1</sup> Col. 1.13 is related to this type of passage by virtue of the fact that it speaks about believers having been transferred to the Kingdom of God's beloved Son.

### CHAPTER III

#### BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING

#### PAUL'S SON OF GOD CHRISTOLOGY

##### A. Introduction

A proper understanding of Paul's Son of God Christology necessitates an examination of the formative influences on this area of his Christological thought. Almost no one today doubts that originally a link existed in the earliest Palestinian Christian community between Jesus' Messiahship and the Christological designation "Son of God."<sup>1</sup> But even the most cursory examination of Paul's Sonship Christology is sufficient to show that the Messianic background of the title "Son of God" is incapable of explaining Paul's understanding. For this reason modern New Testament investigators have sought to explain Paul's thought in terms of Hellenistic Judaism and/or Hellenistic syncretism.<sup>2</sup> It is our contention that recourse to Hellenistic syncretism is unnecessary and in fact improbable as an explanation for the origin of Paul's Son of God Christology. A much more promising solution to the problem is to

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<sup>1</sup>In the past it has been doubted on occasion that Son of God was a Messianic title applied to Jesus in Palestinian Christianity. See for example, Bousset, Kyrios Christos, pp. 91-98, 206-210, who takes this position. On the Palestinian Jewish origins of Sonship Christology, see infra.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Hengel, Son of God, argues for an entirely Jewish background, including Hellenistic Judaism. R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament 1, (1951), pp. 50, 128-133, and H.J. Schoeps, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History (1961), pp. 149-160 look to a Hellenistic setting for Paul's Sonship Christology. Several recent investigators have attempted to explicate Sonship Christology (as well as other Christological titles) in terms of a progressive development in thought through the spheres of Palestinian Judaism, Hellenistic Judaism, and finally Hellenistic paganism. To each stratum certain influences or features are attributed. By implication Paul stands at the culmination of this process as the great missionary to the Hellenistic world. See F. Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity (1969), pp. 279-317 and R.H. Fuller, The Foundations of New Testament Christology (1969), pp. 31-33, 65, 68-72, 86-98.



be found in a combination of Palestinian Jewish thought, the self-consciousness and experience of Jesus, and Hellenistic Jewish speculation.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter we shall first examine the claims of those scholars who maintain that Paul's Sonship Christology is explicable primarily in terms of Hellenistic syncretism. When the unsoundness of this conclusion has been demonstrated, we shall then attempt to set out what we consider to be the proper understanding of the background to Paul's Son of God Christology.

## B. Supposed Hellenistic Influence On Paul's Sonship Christology

### 1. Introduction to the Problem

The eminent Jewish philosopher of religions, Hans Joachim Schoeps, who specialized in the history of religions in relationship to the rise of Christianity, wrote in his important work, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, that it was impossible to understand Paul's Son of God Christology in light of his Jewish origins. He maintained that Paul's elevation of the Jewish Messiah to the status of real divinity (the essence of Paul's Sonship Christology in Schoeps' mind) was radically un-Jewish:

. . . there is no possibility of derivation from Jewish sources, but--if indeed it is a question of derivation--it is impossible to refute the idea of a link with heathen mythological conceptions, filtered through the Hellenistic mysticism of the time.<sup>2</sup>

He argued that Paul took the legitimate Messianic title of dignity, "Son of God," and made it "an ontological affirmation, and raised it to a mythical level of thought."<sup>3</sup> This, according to Schoeps, could happen only in the context of Hellenistic pagan thought. He goes on to draw a startling conclusion:

. . . we see in the  $\nu\acute{\iota}\delta\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  belief, to which Jesus himself testifies according to the synoptic account—and only there—

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<sup>1</sup> Anyone familiar with the work of Hengel, Son of God will realize that this is not a new thesis, but it is one which requires further clarification and explications. The material in this chapter is intended to complement and at places supplement the work of Hengel.

<sup>2</sup> Schoeps, Paul, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

the sole decisive heathen premise of Pauline thought. All that belongs to it and flows from it (e.g. the condescending heavenly man of Philippians, the dying with Christ, the realistic evaluation of the sacraments, etc.) is un-Jewish and akin to heathen ideas of the time.<sup>1</sup>

Schoeps ends his discussion of Paul's Sonship Christology by mentioning the possible Hellenistic pagan influences on Pauline thought. He mentions the apotheosis of the state religions of the Ptolemies and the Roman imperial cult,<sup>2</sup> Hellenistic Mystery Religion gods like Sandan of Tarsus, Hellenistic divine men (θεῖοι ἄνδρες), and divine saviour figures like the Gnostic Simon Magus (the redeemed redeemer myth). Although Schoeps himself draws no definite conclusion about these influences, they include the main categories which scholars have suggested as the pagan sources for Paul's Son of God Christology. For this reason we may critically examine these possible influences in order to show the improbability of a direct Hellenistic pagan derivation of Paul's Son of God Christology.

## 2. Son of God and the Imperial Cult<sup>3</sup>

From the time of Caesar Augustus onward the Roman emperors received the title divi filius which was translated into Greek as ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ or more simply as θεοῦ υἱός. The Latin title divi filius originally meant that Augustus was the son of the deified Julius. Its origins had nothing to do with the imperial cult since Octavian, the adopted son of Julius Caesar, assumed the title as early as 42 B.C.,<sup>4</sup> more than a decade before he became emperor.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 158-160. Schoeps is cautious enough to admit that in all probability it will always remain impossible to determine the origin of Paul's faith in the Son of God. He does think, however, that the most likely possibilities are those which are deduced from the life of the apostle himself. For this reason Schoeps seems to favor the Sandan hypothesis.

<sup>3</sup>For a comprehensive treatment of the broader problem of ruler cults in the ancient world and the impact on Christianity see L. Cerfaux and J. Tondrian, Un Concurrent du Christianisme. Le Culte des Souverains dans la Civilisation Gréco-Romaine (1957). See also E. Lohmeyer, Christuskult und Kaiserkult (1919).

<sup>4</sup>See D. Cuss, Imperial cult and Honorary Terms in the New Testament (1974), p. 72.



The title was most probably appropriated to strengthen his position as the legitimate heir to the power amassed by Julius Caesar. The Greek translation θεοῦ υἱός, which became common in the imperial period, offered other possibilities. The rulers of pre-Ptolemaic Egypt had long before assumed the title son of the sun god, Re. The title was transmitted into the Hellenistic world when Alexander the Great received the title "son of Ammon Zeus" from the Ammon oracle in North Africa. The title then passed to the Ptolemies in 331 B.C.<sup>1</sup> From this time forward it came into common use, and so when Augustus' title divi filius was translated as θεοῦ υἱός it took up the Hellenistic tradition of honoring rulers with the title "son of god" while leaving behind the more ambiguous Latin, son of the deified.

The question for us is how significant was the use of the title "son of god" in the imperial cult for the development of the Son of God title for Christ. Although Schoeps suggested that some have traced belief in Christ's divine Sonship to the apotheosis of the Roman imperial cult,<sup>2</sup> we have not found any scholar who does so in an unequivocal manner. On the other hand, many positively deny the possibility.<sup>3</sup> What is said on occasion, however, is that the Christological and the imperial cult uses of the title "Son of God" reflect in some way the common piety of the masses of men in the Greco-Roman world. When Christian missionaries began preaching about Christ, the Son of God, in the pagan world, their message was readily received because it conformed to the popular desire for divine saviour figures.<sup>4</sup> But even this assumption is questionable since, as A.D. Nock has observed, the title "son of god" was "fairly

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<sup>1</sup>See P.W. von Martitz, "υἱός κτλ.," TDNT 8, pp. 336-337, on the history of the use of son of god in ruler cults.

<sup>2</sup>Schoeps, Paul, p. 159. Cf. also the remarks of L. Cerfaux, Christ in the Theology of St. Paul (1959), pp. 456-457.

<sup>3</sup>A. Deissmann, Bible Studies (1903), pp. 166-167 was, to our knowledge, the first to expressly reject the possibility that the application of the title "son of god" to the Caesars could explain either the origins or the significance of the title in Christianity. Subsequently, many others have, including E. Lohmeyer, Christuskult, p. 24; A.D. Nock, "Early Gentile Christianity and its Hellenistic Background," ERAW 1 (1972), p. 85; Cerfaux, Christ, pp. 456-458; Fuller, Foundations of Christology, pp. 88-89; Cuss, Imperial Cult, p. 74; and Hengel, Son of God, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup>See especially, G.P. Wetter, "Der Sohn Gottes." Eine Untersuchung über den Charakter und die Tendenz des Johannes-Evangeliums

colourless" among the imperial styles.<sup>1</sup> It was primarily a piece of flattery. There is no evidence to suggest that it had any impact on the piety of the masses or their longing for a divine saviour figure.<sup>2</sup> In contrast Paul's usage of the title "Son of God" for Christ relates to his divine pre-existence, entry into the world, redemptive death, resurrection and parousia. It is anything but a colorless title in Paul.

In summary, no real evidence has ever been presented to prove the derivation of the Christological title "Son of God" from the corresponding imperial title. The two uses of the title "Son of God" do not even tell us much about the religious feelings of the masses of the Greco-Roman world. The introduction of the imperial title "son of god" into a discussion of the origins of Paul's Son of God Christology is a red herring, though it may have a place in a discussion of the background of the title outside Paul.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Son of God and the Mystery Religions

The early part of this century saw a vast amount of work dedicated to the problem of the influence of the mystery religions on the development of early Christianity. Clear lines of debate were drawn among scholars. Some urged that the mystery religions had exercised a preponderant influence on nascent Hellenistic Christianity, while others, with equal fervor, maintained that early Christianity had not been influenced appreciably by the mystery religions.<sup>4</sup> The focus of attention in the debate concerned

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(1916), pp. 19-20, and Lohmeyer, Christuskult, pp. 24-25. Cf. also Fuller, Foundations of Christology, pp. 88-89.

<sup>1</sup>Nock, "Early Gentile Christianity," p. 85. Cf. Cerfaux and Tondrian, Concurrent du Christianisme, p. 449.

<sup>2</sup>It is often said that Augustus, as a supposed son of Apollo, was a divine man figure, but this introduces a different range of problems to those involved in the titular use of the term "son of god" for the Roman emperors.

<sup>3</sup>Matters may be somewhat different in the relation of the imperial cult to the Johannine usage of the title "Son of God." See Cuss, Imperial Cult, pp. 73-74.

<sup>4</sup>For lists of scholars from both sides of the debate see B.M. Metzger, "Considerations of Methodology in the Study of the Mystery Religions and Early Christianity," HTR 48 (1955), pp. 2-4.



three primary areas: the sacraments,<sup>1</sup> Pauline mysticism,<sup>2</sup> and Christology.<sup>3</sup> The earlier debates have now largely subsided making possible a more reasoned and less polemical approach to the question of the relationship of the mystery religions and early Gentile Christianity.

The issue which concerns us at present is whether or not the mystery religions form part of the background for understanding Paul's Son of God Christology. R. Bultmann in his Theology of the New Testament maintains that one of the concepts of divine sonship common in oriental Hellenism was

the idea of son-divinities, upon whom cultic worship was bestowed and who were regarded as saviors. About such divinities, worshiped in "mysteries," their myths relate that they had suffered the human fate of death but had risen again from the death. But according to the belief of their worshipers, the fate of these divinities establishes a salvation which is imparted to those who experience with the deity his death and resurrection in the rites of the mysteries.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For sound discussions on the impact of the mystery religions on the Christian sacraments see A.D. Nock, "Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian Sacraments," ERAW 2, pp. 791-820; G. Wagner, Pauline Baptism and the Pagan Mysteries (1967).

<sup>2</sup>See A. Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle (1931), for the early debate and more recently A. Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism: Christ in the Mystical Teaching of St. Paul (1960).

<sup>3</sup>W. Bousset, before all others, set in motion the debate over Christology. He contended in his famous work Kyrios Christos, esp. pp. 138-148 that one of the most important influences on the Christian use of the term "κύριος" for Christ was the use of the term for the cult deities in various mystery religions. This formed part of his argument that the title "Lord" was wholly an innovation of Hellenistic Christianity. Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 124, among others accepts the view that the Christian usage of kyrios was dependent upon its use for the cult deities of the mystery religions. For more recent discussions of the origin of the title "Lord" which show the weaknesses in Bousset's total position see Hahn, Titles of Jesus, pp. 68-128; O. Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament (1963), pp. 195-237; and Fuller, Foundations of Christology, pp. 50, 67-68, 92, 156-158, 184-186, 230-231.

<sup>4</sup>Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 130. See also J. Klausner, From Jesus to Paul (1944), pp. 103-108 who maintains "a Jewish Messiah would never have become the Christian Son of God" without the influence of the mystery religions. This is the view which Schoeps, Paul, p. 160 seemed to favor as well.

He believes this idea has influenced the Son of God Christology preserved in the Pauline letters.<sup>1</sup> No information exists, however, to indicate that the mystery religions placed any emphasis on the conception that their deities were sons of god, nor for that matter that the initiates became sons of the cult deities.<sup>2</sup> For this reason it is highly improbable that the mystery deities contributed to the Christological title "Son of God." Thus the discussion of the dependence of Christological Sonship on the mysteries must center in the conception of the dying and rising god.

That the various oriental mysteries of the first century of our era possessed the dying and rising god concept is often taken for granted. It is then assumed, as with Bultmann, Klausner, and Schoeps, that the dying and rising gods served as models for the dying and rising of Christ in Hellenistic Christianity. But this hypothesis has a number of weaknesses. The most fundamental weakness is that recent research has shown that the major oriental mystery deities were not dying and rising gods, at least not in the first century. Günter Wagner has shown that the important mystery god, Sarapis, created by the first Ptolemy to unite his Greek and native Egyptian subjects, never was a dying and rising god. The dying and rising of the god played no part in the Attis cult originally and only came in, if at all, long after Christianity was well established. The dying and rising of the god was not a feature in the Adonis cult of the first century either. The essence of this cult's concern was the movement from life to death, but not the reverse.<sup>3</sup> In short, the evidence for a ubiquitous conception of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 128-132.

<sup>2</sup>Hengel, Son of God, p. 25. It is no accident or oversight that von Martitz, "Υἱός," pp. 336-340 makes no reference to the mystery gods in discussing the Hellenistic background of the title "Son of God."

<sup>3</sup>Wagner, Pauline Baptism, pp. 92-93, 178-201, 213. C. Colpe, "Zur mythologischen Struktur der Adonis--, Attis--und Osiris-Überlieferungen," liṣān mithurti. Festschrift für Wolfram Freiherr von Soden, (1969), p. 42 says, "Adonis, Attis, und Osiris [who was essentially replaced by Sarapis] sind nicht nur keine sterbenden und auferstehenden Vegetationsgötter-sie repräsentieren auch keine einheitliche archaisch-mediterrane Gottesvorstellung anderer Art." He claims with some justification that the common pattern of dying and rising gods does not represent a simple expression of the nature cycle. The use of the language of dying and rising was determined not by the analysis of the mythological structure involved but by the already existing language of Christian



dying and rising gods among the oriental mysteries of the first century is non-existent. But even if evidence were to emerge that the dying and rising god was a well-known type in the period when Christianity arose, other factors would militate against its importance in understanding Paul's Son of God Christology. In the first place, the tradition of Christ's death and resurrection may be traced to the earliest Palestinian tradition which stood firmly outside the range of the mystery religions' influence.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the differences between the mystery gods and Christ, the Son of God, are so great that the mystery deities are a most unlikely source for Christological material. The activities of the mystery gods related to indeterminable points in the past, but Christ was a historical figure of the very recent past whom living men had known. Christ pre-existed and then was sent into human flesh by God, but the mysteries do not possess gods who descend into life.<sup>2</sup> Moreover the mystery gods died because of divine jealousy or fate and certainly not willingly. Christ, on the other hand, died according to the will of God in order to redeem men and reconcile them to God. In light of the massive differences between Christ's death and resurrection, and the death (and possible resurrection) of the mystery deities, any real influence on Paul's Sonship Christology is excluded.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the concept of the dying and rising son-divinities

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theology. The vegetation deities embodied in the mysteries did not die and rise; they died and were reborn from the earth goddess. If Colpe's contention (cf. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 90) is correct, then it may mean, as Wagner (pp. 199-200) thinks possible in the case of Adonis, that the resurrection of cult deities only came in to aid the mysteries in their competition with Christianity. In other words any talk of dying and rising mystery gods is the product of the mysteries borrowing from Christianity. It should perhaps be said that Schoeps' reference to Sandan-Heracles of Tarsus as a dying and rising god is also very questionable. See A.D. Nock, "'Son of God' in Pauline and Hellenistic Thought. A Review of Schoeps Paulus," ERAW 2, p. 930, esp. n. 5.

<sup>1</sup> Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 90. If the basic confessional formula contained in Rom. 1.3-4 goes back to a Palestinian original, then the ideas of Sonship and resurrection were already connected before any conceivable contact with the mystery religions. On Rom. 1.3-4 see *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> Nock, "'Son of God,'" pp. 933-934.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Metzger, "Mystery Religions," pp. 16-20.

mentioned by Bultmann played no more part in the formation of the Son of God Christology than did the cult of the emperors. The differences between Christ, the Son of God, and the mystery religions' dying and rising gods is so great that any similarities are only formal. Finally, it is beyond question that Christianity possessed its belief in the death and resurrection of Christ before it encountered any mystery religions. In contrast, some of the mystery religions only came to have dying and rising gods after their exposure to, and confrontation with, Christianity.

#### 4. Son of God and Theios Aner

The secondary literature dealing with the background of the Christological title "Son of God" does not indicate that a dependence upon the imperial cult or the mystery religions has ever received widespread favor. At best only isolated references exist to a relationship between the title "Son of God" and these categories. Matters are different, however, with regard to the theios aner concept.<sup>1</sup>

R. Reitzenstein initiated the discussion regarding the figure of the theios aner in the first edition of his Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen in 1910. He pointed to figures like Apollonius of Tyana and Alexander of Abonuteichos as examples of theioi andres, god-men who were endowed with powers of knowledge, prophecy, miracles, and personal holiness through their union with God.<sup>2</sup> The theios aner concept was then taken up by G.P. Wetter in 1916 and applied to the specific Christological category of divine Sonship. In his chapter on the origins of the title "Son of God" he asserted, "fließt doch die Sohn-Gottes-Vorstellung mit einer im Hellenismus viel allgemeineren zusammen: dem θεῖος ἄνθρωπος, oder was dafür unter den Christen gesagt wird: ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ."<sup>3</sup> He made this connection with respect to Christianity

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<sup>1</sup>An excellent introduction to the whole question of theios aner in modern research is to be found in C.H. Holladay, Theios Aner in Hellenistic Judaism. A Critique of the Use of this Category in New Testament Christology (1977), pp. 1-45. We are indebted to him for a number of references to the recent secondary literature.

<sup>2</sup>Now see R. Reitzenstein, Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligion nach ihren Grundgedanken und Wirkungen, 3rd ed. (1927), pp. 25ff. For reference to the first edition see Holladay, Theios Aner, pp. 24-26.

<sup>3</sup>Wetter, Sohn Gottes, pp. 186-187.



because he believed that in popular Hellenistic piety the son of god figure and the theios aner were occasionally identified.<sup>1</sup> With Reitzenstein and Wetter the two main streams of discussion regarding the "divine man" figure and his relation to Christian origins are already present: Jesus the divine miracle worker and Jesus the divine Son of God. As Holladay says of current scholarship:

When the ordinate of Jesus' miracles and the abscissa of his divinity . . . are plotted on a graph in contemporary scholarship, more often than not, many scholars are finding theios aner at the point of intersection, for it is chiefly in respect to these two foci of Christological investigation that the expression seems to be most frequently employed.<sup>2</sup>

Since the work of Hans Windisch, Paulus und Christus, it has commonly been assumed that the Hellenistic theios aner concept penetrated Hellenistic Judaism in Philo and other Jewish writers carrying on apologetical dialogue with Hellenistic thought.<sup>3</sup> Windisch claimed that figures like Moses, known as men of God in the Old Testament, became assimilated to the theioi andres of the Greeks. The theios aner conception is then thought to have passed into Christianity from here.<sup>4</sup> The careful study of C.R. Holladay has shown the tenuity of this hypothesis which dominates much of the discussion about the theios aner Christology.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the whole discussion of the theios aner concept and its impact on Christology is encumbered with another major difficulty. The problem resides in the term theios aner and what it actually meant in antiquity.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>2</sup>Holladay, Theios Aner, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>H. Windisch, Paulus und Christus: Eine Biblisch-Religions-geschichtlicher Vergleich (1934), pp. 24-114. Reitzenstein, Mysterienreligionen, seems to have already maintained that the Hellenistic divine man ideology penetrated Judaism in Philo. See Holladay, Theios Aner, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup>The first part of Windisch's book outlines the religious-historical background of the theios aner idea. In the second part entitled "Paulus und Christus als Gottesmänner biblischer Prägung" he attempts to explain Christ and Paul as divine men. See Windisch, Paulus und Christus, pp. 115-314. More recently see Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 290. See also Holladay, Theios Aner, pp. 15-18. D. Georgi, Die Gegner des Paulus im 2. Korintherbrief: Studien zur religiösen Propaganda in der Spätantike (1964), pp. 220-234, identifies Paul's opponents as Jewish Christian missionaries who had imbibed the theios aner idea so heavily that they thought they were themselves divine men preaching the divine man Christ.

<sup>5</sup>Holladay, Theios Aner, especially pp. 233ff.

Many investigators, particularly since L. Bieler's famous work, Θεῖος Ἄνθρωπος,<sup>1</sup> have treated the term as though it were a well-defined technical designation in the pre-Christian period which included the ideas of miracle working and divine nature, especially conceived as divine sonship.<sup>2</sup> The fault in part arises from a mistake in methodology. The error is most obvious in Bieler's work. He describes the task he undertakes in the following terms:

Doch nicht die geschichtliche Entwicklung, die eben kurz angedeutet wurde, soll Gegenstand dieser Arbeit sein . . . ; sie will vielmehr den Gesamttypus, gewissermassen die platonische Idee des antiken Gottmenschen schauen lassen, der sich, mag der einzelne gleich nie und nirgends alle wesentlichen Züge in letzter Vollkommenheit lückenlos in sich vereinigen, doch in jedem seiner Vertreter bald mehr, bald weniger ausprägt; jeder liefert Steine, die sich schliesslich zum anschaulichen Bilde vereinigen lassen.<sup>3</sup>

This procedure, implicitly followed by others (many have simply accepted Bieler's findings),<sup>4</sup> means that Bieler has taken isolated and disparate features occasionally connected by the adjective θεῖος, but almost never with the phrase θεῖος ἄνθρωπος, from writings separated by as much as 600 years, and has formed a composite figure known as the theios aner. Both W. von Martitz, the classical philologist, and O. Betz, the New Testament scholar, have given cause to doubt that a fixed conception known by the designation theios aner existed in the period of the origins of Christology, if ever.<sup>5</sup> As Holladay points

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<sup>1</sup>L. Bieler, Θεῖος Ἄνθρωπος: Das Bild des "Göttlichen Menschen" im Spätantike und Frühchristentum 1 and 2, originally published (1935-36), reprinted (1967) two volumes in one. (It is this latter edition which we have used.)

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 130; H. Braun, "The Meaning of New Testament Christology," JTC 5 (1968), pp. 99ff; Fuller, Foundations of Christology, pp. 97-98; Hahn, Titles of Jesus, pp. 288ff.

<sup>3</sup>Bieler, Θεῖος Ἄνθρωπος 1, p. 4; Hengel, Son of God, p. 31 claims that the majority of sources referred to by Bieler come from Neo-Platonism or the church's hagiography.

<sup>4</sup>O. Betz, "The Concept of the so-called 'Divine Man' in Mark's Christology," Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honor of Allen P. Wikgren (1972), p. 232 mentions a very interesting example of how the theios aner concept perpetuates itself by using this sort of methodology. His name sake, H.D. Betz, in his study Lukian von Samosata und das Neue Testament: Religionsgeschichtliche und Paränetische Parallelen (1961) finds a wealth of material in Lucian of Samosata dealing with the theios aner concept, but then strangely has to admit that no explicit title exists for the material. In other words he has forced a preconceived concept on the texts.

<sup>5</sup>Von Martitz, "Θεῖος," pp. 338-340 and Betz, "Divine Man," pp. 231ff.



out, the term θεῖος was capable of at least four renderings. This means that theios aner was itself capable of at least four renderings: "divine man," "inspired man," "a man related to God," and "an extraordinary man."<sup>1</sup> Such problems should caution against the uncritical use of the term theios aner. But even if the very idea of theioi andres as conceived by contemporary scholarship is questionable, do figures described as divine constitute one of the sources for the predication of divine Sonship to Christ?

Many scholars who treat the idea of theios aner Christology assume that a connection exists in the non-Biblical sources between the divine quality in figures described as theioi and their sonship to a god.<sup>2</sup> This does not seem to be the case. As P.W. von Martitz observes:

Even when legend invented a divine origin for outstanding personages, this did not lead to υἱός predication. The more or less clear idea of divinity does not find linguistic expression, especially in the form of stress on divine sonship. When, therefore, divine sonship is associated with the description as θεῖος this is quite accidental. The conceptual spheres of divine sonship and θεῖος may well be related, but the terminology does not support this association.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from this terminological problem, a genuine difference in conception exists between divine figures in antiquity and Christ as the Son of God. Christ was the pre-existent Son of God sent by God into the world to redeem men. After his death he was raised from the dead and received a position subordinate only to God himself (cf. Phil. 2.6-11). In contrast the figures to whom divinity is attributed in the Hellenistic world died, but not for the sake of others. The idea of resurrection almost never plays a part in what happens to such figures after death,<sup>4</sup> and none are ever said to have received the same sort of exalted position which Christ did after his death

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<sup>1</sup>Holladay, Theios Aner, p. 237. Cf. Liddell and Scott, "θεῖος," p. 788.

<sup>2</sup>This view, as was mentioned previously, goes back to Wetter, Sohn Gottes, p. 82. Cf. Bieler, Θεῖος ἄνθρωπος 1, pp. 134ff; Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 130; Braun, "Meaning of Christology," pp. 99ff; Hahn, Titles of Jesus, pp. 288ff.

<sup>3</sup>Von Martitz, "υἱός," p. 340. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 69 who accepts the existence of the theios aner idea, albeit in a drastically modified form, says: "never in the available evidence is the term υἱός θεοῦ ('son of God') used for this conception [theios aner] in Hellenistic Judaism."

<sup>4</sup>The report of Apollonius' resurrection was probably based on Christ's resurrection.

and resurrection. The most important difference, however, is found in Christ's pre-existence. With his vast knowledge of the literature and religions of the ancient world A.D. Nock is able to cite only three examples where a form of genuine pre-existence (that is, something other than the common idea of existence connected with the transmigration of souls) occurs.<sup>1</sup> One is contained in the Hermetic literature and refers to Osiris and Isis who were sent to civilize mankind (Kore Kosmou, Exc. 23.62ff.). But Nock thinks this instance has been influenced by Christianity and is in fact part of an anti-Christian polemic. Horace portrays Octavian as Mercury sent from the gods to avenge Julius Caesar's death (Carmina 1, 2, 41ff.), but as Hengel points out, this is "political, poetic flattery" indicating that Horace regarded Augustus as a ruler sent by the gods.<sup>2</sup> The final instance mentioned by Nock concerns Pythagoras. The biography of Iamblichus claimed a community of Pythagoras' disciples counted him as one of the gods sent to bring the blessings of philosophy (Iambl. De Vita Pythagorica, I, 8). It is unclear how widespread this notion actually was.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the limited number of possible examples for pre-existent gods becoming human, and the possible problems attendant with each instance, argues against the existence of a common Hellenistic conception of pre-existent gods, who became men for benevolent purposes, being a source for divine Sonship Christology.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Nock, "Son of God," pp. 937-939. He maintains that the occasional reference to a ruler being sent down is not on the same plane.

<sup>2</sup>Hengel, Son of God, pp. 37-38. Hengel discusses the three instances given by Nock and adds a fourth of his own. His own example (pp. 35-36) is Hermes in the Stoic Cornutus who is sent into the world as "the rational principle." But here, of course, Hermes, as the Logos sent by the gods, lacks any personal existence. Braun, "Meaning of Christology," p. 103, n. 47 is only able to add Plutarch, Vita Romulus, 28; but see Hengel, Son of God, p. 39 against its relevance.

<sup>3</sup>Hengel, ibid., pp. 36-37 thinks in the case of Pythagoras that it is difficult to distinguish between "the idea of the transmigration of souls from the notion of the incarnation of a god."

<sup>4</sup>Nock, "Son of God," pp. 933-934 points out that one of the common attacks against Christianity in the period of the Church Fathers was the very belief in the sending of God's Son into the world. According to Origen, Celsus repeatedly charged that "No god, O Jews and Christians, and no child of a god has come down or could come down." (This is quoted from Nock. For this reference and other examples see pp. 933-934.) If the incarnation of deities were a common notion in the Hellenistic world, it is highly improbable that such attacks would ever have been mounted.



In summary we may say that the relevance of the term theios aner and its related conceptions are highly problematic with regard to the origin of Christ's divine Sonship. Furthermore, those examples where men in the Hellenistic world were characterized as divine do not appear to have any importance for the divine Sonship Christology of early Christianity.

##### 5. Son of God and the Gnostic Redeemer

Perhaps no single topic has commanded so much attention among New Testament and History of Religions scholars in the twentieth century as the question of Gnosticism. Was Gnosticism a pre-Christian phenomenon, or was it a distinctly Christian heresy? Did Gnosticism have its roots in dualistic Persian thought which was superimposed on Hellenistic thought, or did Gnosticism first develop within Judaism? If Gnosticism postdates the appearances of Christianity, to what extent were gnosticizing tendencies present in the pre-Christian and early Christian periods? Did the Gnostic redeemer myth antedate Christianity, or was it influenced by the Christian redeemer figure of Christ? These are but a few of the complex problems which investigators have treated with regard to Gnosticism. It is specifically the last problem mentioned above which concerns us. The research on this issue alone is so vast, however, that it is only possible to touch its surface here.

The beginnings of the modern discussion of the Gnostic redeemer myth go back to the early days of the History of Religions School. W. Bousset in his Hauptprobleme der Gnosis maintained:

wir werden nach allen Beobachtungen die Behauptung aufstellen dürfen, dass der Erlösungsmythus oder die Erlösungsmythen der gnostischen Religion nicht erst aus dem Gedankenkreis der christlichen Religion abgeleitet sind, sondern dass sie vorher vorhanden waren und nur künstlich mit diesem Gedankenkreise kombiniert wurden, dass in der Gnosis fremde mythische Erlösergestalten mit der Gestalt Christi nachträglich und künstlich identifiziert sind.<sup>1</sup>

Not surprisingly, Bousset found in Paul indications of the adaptation of the redeemer myth to Christ.<sup>2</sup> In his later work, Kyrios Christos, Bousset claimed that Paul had made Christianity "a one-sided religion of redemption" by "the connection of the redeemer myth with the figure of Jesus of Nazareth."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>W. Bousset, Hauptprobleme der Gnosis (1973), p. 276.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>3</sup>Bousset, Kyrios Christos, p. 254. Cf. pp. 60-68 and 265-275.

Bousset, following the lead of H. Schmidt, sought to explain the origins of the redeemer myth in tracing a line from the ancient Babylonian god Marduk to the redeemer figure in the Mandaean sources.<sup>1</sup> R. Reitzenstein, on the other hand, in a series of books and essays maintained that the redeemer myth had originated in pre-Christian Iranian Zoroastrianism.<sup>2</sup> Reitzenstein, along with R. Bultmann, reconstructed the original myth from the relatively late Manichaean and Mandaean sources.<sup>3</sup> They believed these texts witnessed to the pre-Christian redeemed redeemer (Erlöster Erlöser) myth which had originated in Iran and then had moved westward in the pre-Christian Gnostic movement. Although the myth was not extant in its complete form until the Manichaean literature, it left vestiges of itself embedded in various writings from Jewish Wisdom literature to Philo and from Jewish Apocalyptic writings to Gnostic Christian texts. The Mandaean literature was especially important because Reitzenstein and Bultmann thought the Mandaeans were a pre-Christian baptismal sect which had preserved, independent of Christianity, elements of the redeemed redeemer myth. The redeemed redeemer, as explicated by them, was closely related to Paul's Son of God at several crucial points: both were pre-existent; both were sent into the world; both provided means of redemption for others; and both returned to heaven, from whence they had come, in exaltation. Because of these similarities, and the belief that the redeemer myth was pre-Christian, it was natural to assume that Paul was dependent upon this myth for elements

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<sup>1</sup>Bousset, Gnosis, pp. 242ff.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of Reitzenstein's work and the development of his thought see C. Colpe, Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule: Darstellung und Kritik ihres Bildes vom gnostischen Erlösermythus (1961), pp. 34-57 and E.M. Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism: A Survey of the Proposed Evidences (1973), passim. With the exceptions of Poimandres: Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristliche Literature (1904) and Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen nach ihren Grundgedanken und Wirkungen (1927<sup>3</sup>) none of Reitzenstein's works have been available to us. Our discussion of the contributions of Reitzenstein and Bultmann is heavily dependent upon Colpe and Yamauchi.

<sup>3</sup>One of Bultmann's earliest contributions on the subject was his essay "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums," ZNW 24 (1925), pp. 100-146. He developed twenty-eight points of contact between the Mandaean and Manichaean redeemer figures, and Jesus as he is presented in the Gospel of John. He then maintained, "Die Hauptabsicht der vorausgehenden Ausführungen ist erreicht,



of his Son of God Christology.<sup>1</sup>

The early work of Bousset was subsumed by the later research of Reitzenstein and Bultmann. The pre-Christian redeemed redeemer myth they posited, however, is no longer tenable. In the first place C. Colpe has demonstrated the inherent inadequacy of the term "redeemed redeemer" which never occurs in the sources but is used of four different variants of the myth.<sup>2</sup> Much more important is the problem of the sources. The Manichaeic and Mandaean texts that played a foundational role in the views of Reitzenstein and Bultmann are incapable of supporting the edifice of a pre-Christian redeemer myth. The Mandaeans may in fact go back to the Jordan valley in the first century A.D., but the documents we possess from the movement can at best only be traced back to the third or fourth centuries. Given their syncretistic character and their contact with Christians, Gnostics, and various indigenous religious groups of the trans-Jordan area and Mesopotamia, it is impossible to identify the original elements of the Mandaeans' system. In other words, they can hardly count as witnesses to a pre-Christian Gnostic redeemer myth.<sup>3</sup> The pedigree of the Manichaeans is no purer. Recent research has conclusively shown that Mani was originally a member of the Elchasaite sect, a Gnostic tending Jewish-Christian baptismal sect.<sup>4</sup> Thus Manichaeism is at heart related in its very essence to Christianity. When

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wenn deutlich geworden ist, dass das Joh-Ev. den skizzierten Erlösungsmythos voraussetzt und nur auf seinen Hintergründen verständlich ist." (p. 139). On the close relationship of his work to that of Reitzenstein, see pp. 103-104. Now see also Bultmann, The Gospel of John: A Commentary (1971), passim. For a brief restatement of the myth see Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting (1956), pp. 163-164, and idem, Theology I, pp. 166-167.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bultmann, Theology I, p. 175; Braun, "Meaning of Christology," pp. 103ff., W. Schmithals, The Office of Apostle in the Early Church (1969), pp. 133-134. E. Käsemann, "A Primitive Christian Baptismal Liturgy," Essays on the New Testament (1964), pp. 154-159; idem, "A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2:5-11," JTC 5 (1968), pp. 45-88; and F.W. Beare, The Epistle to the Philippians (1959), pp. 74-75.

<sup>2</sup>Colpe, Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, pp. 171-193. Cf. R. Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of their Use in Conflict Settings (1971), pp. 230-237.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. R. McL. Wilson, Gnosis and the New Testament (1968), pp. 13ff. and Yamauchi, Gnosticism, pp. 117-142, especially pp. 140-142 for his reconstruction of the developments of Mandaeism.

<sup>4</sup>A. Heinrichs and L. Koenen, "Ein griechischer Mani-Codex," Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 5 (1970), pp. 97-202.

Mandaeism and Manichaeism are properly evaluated for the historical worth of their traditions, it becomes clear that they are useless as witnesses of the pre-Christian Gnostic redeemer myth. With this recognition the edifice built by Reitzenstein and Bultmann comes tumbling down.<sup>1</sup>

The pre-Christian Gnostic redeemer myth is not dead in spite of the inadequacies of its principal reconstruction. Typical of the more recent understanding is the view of H.-M. Schenke,<sup>2</sup> who himself had a hand in showing the failure of the Reitzenstein-Bultmann reconstruction of the redeemed redeemer myth. Schenke still presupposes a pre-Christian Gnostic redeemer myth which has affected New Testament Christology.<sup>3</sup> As evidence for this view he cites a number of Nag Hammadi texts, Poimandres, the Baruch-book of the Gnostic Justin, and the system of Peratae. Schenke ignores the problem of chronology and further assumes that if he can remove Christian language and images he has an original non-Christian, ergo, pre-Christian source.<sup>4</sup> This is a very questionable procedure. Moreover,

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Yamauchi, Gnosticism, pp. 163-169 and passim; Wilson, Gnosis, pp. 27-28; H.-M. Schenke, Der Gott "Mensch" in der Gnosis (1962), p. 148, and Colpe, Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, p. 191, who asserts concerning the model of the redeemed redeemer: "Direkt falsch an diesem Modell scheint mir zu sein, dass es de facto mit dem ganzen Anspruch archaischen Gewichtes belastet ist, als sei der gnostische Erlösermythus irgendwann in grauer Vorzeit entstanden, irgendwo im fernen weiten Orient, den man sich nur wenig genauer als Iran vorzustellen hat, dann durch Raum und Zeit gewandert, um bald in diesem, bald in jenem Überlieferungskreise, z. B. in der Weisheitsdichtung, bei Philo, in den Adamsspekulationen und in der Apokalyptik, einige Mosaiksteinchen zu hinterlassen, dann im Manichäismus noch einmal zu grandioser Einheit zusammengewachsen und bei den Mandäern endgültig in seine Bestandteile zerfallen."

<sup>2</sup>H.-M. Schenke, "Die Neutestamentliche Christologie und der gnostische Erlöser," Gnosis und Neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie (1973), pp. 205-229. Hengel, Son of God, pp. 33-35 who applauds Colpe's work in bringing down the hypothetical reconstruction of the redeemed redeemer myth, fails to notice that Colpe, in his Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, does not deny the existence of a pre-Christian redeemer myth per se. He also fails to take account of the developing views of scholars like Schenke.

<sup>3</sup>Schenke, "Neutestamentliche Christologie," p. 217 explains, "Nach unserer Hypothese hat also diese gnostische Erlöser-Vorstellung, sei es in ihrer kategorialen Grundstruktur, sei es in dieser und jener konkreten Ausformung, hier und dort bzw. dann und wenn auf die Entwicklung der Christologie des Urchristentums eingewirkt." On the relation of the myth to Paul see pp. 218-225.

<sup>4</sup>Against this procedure and its results, cf. C.H. Talbert, "The Myth of the Descending-Ascending Redeemer in Mediterranean Antiquity,"



none of the Nag Hammadi texts he cites can be used in themselves as witnesses for the pre-Christian origins of the redeemer myth if the relevant introductions in The Nag Hammadi Library in English are any indication,<sup>1</sup> nor can Poimandres, the Baruch-book of the Gnostic Justin, or the system of Peratae.<sup>2</sup>

The unavoidable problem for those maintaining a pre-Christian provenance for the Gnostic redeemer myth is that no sources containing the myth antedate Christianity. A number of revealer figures are well-known, not the least being the hypostasized figure of Divine Wisdom from Jewish sources.<sup>3</sup> But the sum of such figures, including the primeval man concept, does not prove a pre-Christian redeemer myth

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NTS 22 (1975-76), pp. 418-419.

<sup>1</sup>The Nag Hammadi Library in English (1977). See the introduction to NH VII, 5; V, 5; VI, 2; VI, 4; II, 4; II, 5; I, 2; and III, 2. For two very different evaluations of the importance of the Nag Hammadi material cf. W. Schmithals, "Gnosis und Neues Testament" Verkündigung und Forschung V. 21, pt. 2 (1976), pp. 22-46 and O. Betz, "Das Problem der Gnosis seit Entdeckung der Texte von Nag Hammadi," Verkündigung und Forschung V. 21, pt. 2 (1976), pp. 46-80.

<sup>2</sup>Although the date of Poimandres cannot be fixed with certainty, C.H. Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks (1935), pp. 201-209 is probably correct in his date of the late first century or the early second century of the Christian era. It is true that Poimandres brings together earlier materials, some of which are from Hellenistic Judaism, but the actual system contained in Poimandres is not datable to the pre-Christian period. No firm evidence exists for dating the Gnostic Justin's system known only through Hippolytus. The Christian allusions are confined to one section which may be stripped away. We are then left with a strange combination of Jewish and pagan myth, more pagan than Jewish. But it should be noted that there is no single redeemer figure, but a series of prophetic revealers inspired by the angel Baruch including Heracles and Jesus. The Peratae system is so thoroughly Christianized that it is difficult to conceive of a non-Christian predecessor for it.

<sup>3</sup>One of the problems in Gnostic research which has not received sufficient attention is whether the Gnostic revealer of saving knowledge should automatically be called a redeemer. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 97 rightly objects to the continuing use of the term "redeemer myth" for figures who were essentially revealer-emissaries. We find his designation "pre-Christian Gnostic revelation myth" less satisfying since we do not think one can speak of a distinct pre-Christian Gnostic movement or Gnostic myth. Almost all of the examples of the Jewish myths of descending and ascending figures adduced by Talbert, "Myth of the Redeemer," pp. 421ff. are to be understood as revealers, not redeemers.

existed.<sup>1</sup> In fact in the chapter which follows it will be seen that the aspects of Paul's Son of God Christology which have parallels in the Gnostic redeemer myth are explicable from a purely Jewish background. The most probable explanation for the parallels between Paul's Christology and those expressions of the Gnostic redeemer myth unaffected by Christianity is that they grew up in similar environments and were therefore responding to similar needs and to corresponding thought forms.<sup>2</sup>

In summary, the absence of documentary evidence for a pre-Christian Gnostic redeemer myth cautions against using the myth to explain Paul's Son of God Christology.<sup>3</sup> The redeemer myth may have developed in some instances independent of Christianity, but this development should be understood as parallel, and therefore without direct influence on Christological formulation, at least in the

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, "Baptismal Liturgy," p. 155 asserts concerning Col. 1.15-20 that this Christological hymn contains the redeemer myth in "a form characteristic of Hellenistic Judaism." As evidence for this claim, he maintains that the hymn embodies elements of the Archetypal man, Wisdom, and the Logos which in combination formed the redeemer myth in Hellenistic Judaism. But where do these features come together into a redeemer myth in Hellenistic Judaism? Col. 1.15-20 is the only extant example, and this one has been historicized by verse 20. In spite of Käsemann's attempts, it is difficult to get back to a non-Christian original without ripping the hymn to pieces. Cf. the criticism of J.T. Sanders, The New Testament Christological Hymns: Their Historical Religious Background (1971), p. 80, though Sanders wrongly attributes to Käsemann the belief that the Gnostic redeemer myth originated within Judaism. Cf. also C. Colpe, "New Testament and Gnostic Christology," Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of E.R. Goodenough (1968), p. 235.

<sup>2</sup>This is essentially the position of Sanders, Christological Hymns, p. 132 and Kramer, Christ, pp. 121-122. See also E.S. Fiorenza, "Wisdom Mythology and the Christological Hymns of the New Testament," Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity (1975), pp. 26-33 who denies the existence of both a basic Wisdom myth and a basic Gnostic redeemer myth, as well as the attendant idea of a developing myth. Instead she speaks of reflective mythology which used "the language and concepts of myth for theological purposes."

<sup>3</sup>Although some have claimed that Simon Magus represents a pre-Christian incarnate redeemer figure this view is highly improbable. See Schmithals, Office of Apostle, p. 137. The recent investigation of K. Beyschlag, Simon Magus und die christliche Gnosis (1974) has gone a long way towards proving that Christian Gnosticism is the essential ingredient in Simonian Gnosis and that the pre-Christian elements are not Gnostic in character.



earliest period, unless evidence to the contrary is brought forth.

## 6. Conclusions

The Jewish New Testament scholar H.J. Schoeps, following the lead of many others, has suggested four possible pagan influences on the origins of Paul's Son of God Christology: the ruler cult, the mystery gods, the theios aner conception, and the Gnostic redeemer myth. The vast quantity of primary and secondary literature related to each of these categories has precluded the possibility of entering into detailed discussion. Such a discussion would have taken us far away from the real interests of this thesis. Nevertheless, one point has become sufficiently clear from the brief examination of the material: the various categories of Hellenistic pagan thought presented as possible influences on Paul's Son of God Christology are in reality of little or no importance. The ruler cult, to our knowledge, has never seriously been suggested as a source of Paul's Son of God Christology. The mystery gods were never identified in any special way as "sons" and the conception of their being dying and rising gods is, for many of them, inaccurate. Those who did become dying and rising gods did so apparently after the first century. The idea of the theios aner and the notions related to it proved to have little relation to Son of God Christology. The Gnostic redeemed redeemer myth as conceived by Bultmann and others is primarily an abstraction from the sources, a modern myth, though something like the redeemed redeemer myth may have had a place in Manichaeism. The more recent discussions of a simpler Gnostic redeemer myth founder on the absence of evidence for its existence in the period prior to Paul.

The inability of the Hellenistic pagan categories to provide any illumination on the origin of Paul's Son of God Christology mean that we must look elsewhere. The obvious places are Paul's Jewish heritage and the Gospel tradition itself.

## C. The Jewish and Gospels Background Of Paul's Sonship Christology

### 1. Preliminary Considerations

In looking for the background of the apostle Paul's Son of God Christology, several different areas must be considered. The

obvious beginning point is the Old Testament with its occasional references to the Davidic kings as the sons of God. A second area which requires attention is Palestinian Judaism since it is of interest to know whether the Old Testament ideas regarding royal divine sonship survived. A consideration of the background of Paul's Son of God Christology must of necessity also take account of Jesus' life and ministry because the Gospels portray him as the Son of God during his earthly existence. Finally, Diaspora Judaism must be examined for its contribution to the early Son of God Christology.<sup>1</sup>

A number of scholars in recent years have attempted to separate layers of tradition in the use of Christological titles. They then assign certain aspects to Palestinian Jewish Christianity, Hellenistic Jewish Christianity, and Hellenistic Gentile Christianity.<sup>2</sup> The assumption is made that Paul stands at the end of the Christological development and so his Christology still possesses tradition-historical features of the earlier stages of the process. One may talk, therefore, about pre-Pauline Christology, isolating the pre-Pauline elements from the Pauline synthesis. This schematization is essentially inaccurate as several recent studies have shown. Before all, M. Hengel, in his incisive essay entitled "Christologie

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<sup>1</sup>We are aware of the danger of too rigid a distinction between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism and for this reason have chosen the more precise designation Diaspora Judaism. This term really relates to Alexandrian Judaism since virtually our only literary sources for non-Palestinian Judaism for the New Testament period come from Egypt. Even the designations "Palestinian" and "Diaspora" Judaism, however, are to a certain extent inadequate. Nevertheless, in tracing a specific motif, such as is being done in this chapter, the employment of the motif in differing ways in literature emanating from various cultural spheres is worthy of notice and may reflect differing interests in the motif.

<sup>2</sup>The tendency to separate the origins of Christological titles into two stages, the first Palestinian and the second Hellenistic, goes back at least to W. Heitmüller, "Zum Problem Paulus und Jesus," ZNW 13 (1912), pp. 320-337 according to Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 13. n. 6. The scheme was given a detailed exposition especially in Bousset, Kyrios Christos. Bousset flatly stated: "Between Paul and the Palestinian primitive community stand the Hellenistic communities in Antioch, Damascus, and Tarsus" (p. 119). This conception also plays a significant role in Bultmann's Theology I where he distinguishes between the kerygma of the earliest church (Palestinian) (pp. 33-62) and that of the Hellenistic church aside from (and prior to) Paul (pp. 63-183). F. Hahn, Titles of Jesus, is closely identified with the inclusion of a third stage in the development of the early church by distinguishing between Hellenistic Jewish and Hellenistic non-Jewish Christian communities (see pp. 12-13). He then applied these categories to the problem of the developing



und neutestamentliche Chronologie,"<sup>1</sup> has argued convincingly that the Christological development of the first twenty years of Christianity, so far as we have access to information about it, occurred within the Greek speaking communities of Jerusalem, Caesarea, Damascus, Antioch, and other Syro-Palestinian locations. Paul was converted within the first two to four years of the Christian movement and shared in the life and theological reflection of the church of Syria and Palestine. His conversion antedates the beginnings of the true Hellenistic Gentile mission, and moreover, whatever we know about the earliest Hellenistic Gentile mission is largely through his writings. In fact, Paul was in all likelihood a participant in the Gentile mission from its very beginning. These considerations clearly indicate that it is misleading to distance Paul from the Christological development of the earliest period and the church of Syria and Palestine. The sources available to us render discussions regarding genuine pre-Pauline Christological traditions virtually impossible, and it is further problematic whether the term "beside Paul" (nebenpaulinisch) Christology has any meaning.<sup>2</sup> For these reasons no attempt will be made in this study to offer a discussion of the pre-Pauline Christian background to the Son of God Christology.<sup>3</sup>

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Christology of the early church. This scheme was borrowed by Fuller, Foundations of Christology, who ponderously moves through each stage in a separate chapter discussing each relevant Christological title (pp. 142-242). The same assumption is operative in Kramer, Christ, who is concerned specifically with Pauline Christology and the pre-Pauline tradition. Cf. also H. Schlier, "Zu Röm 1, 3f.," Neues Testament und Geschichte: Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament (1972), pp. 207-218 for an application of this understanding to a single passage.

<sup>1</sup>Hengel, "Christologie und Chronologie," pp. 43-68. See also the criticism of I.H. Marshall, "Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity: Some Critical Comments," NTS 19 (1972-73), pp. 271-287. Cf. C.F.D. Moule, The Origin of Christology (1977), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>See especially Hengel, "Christologie und Chronologie," pp. 58ff. for a further discussion of the consequences of his findings for the understanding of the development of Christology. The strength of Marshall, "Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity," is that he shows how precarious it is to distinguish between what is Palestinian Jewish Christian and Hellenistic Jewish Christian.

<sup>3</sup>See, however, the discussion of Rom. 1.3-4 infra.



A further limitation of this background study must be mentioned. In the chapters on Paul's Son of God Christology it will be argued that the ideas explicitly and implicitly associated with his Son of God Christology indicate that this category is of decisive significance for understanding Paul's theology. The pervasive nature of his Son of God Christology prevents us from discussing every detail of its background here, but several other important details will receive special attention in the chapters which follow. What we are interested in setting out at present is the broad framework in which Paul's Son of God Christology must be seen.

## 2. The Old Testament Background of the Son of God Designation

Although the Old Testament refers to the people of Israel as God's son or sons on a number of occasions, this has no direct significance for the early church's Son of God Christology.<sup>1</sup> The important factor for Christology is that the Davidic kings were thought to possess a special sonship relationship with Yahweh. This does not mean that they were considered to be divine kings according to the pattern of other ancient Near Eastern kings, as has often been maintained.<sup>2</sup> The Israelite kings, probably from the time of Solomon onward, received the acclamation "son of Yahweh" at their coronations to signify their special connection with the national Deity. The divine sonship of the Davidic kings was based on an old covenant between God and David, the founder of the dynasty, recorded in

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<sup>1</sup>The Old Testament references to the people of Israel being the son or sons of God will be discussed in the second part of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup>The advocacy of the divine kingship of the Israelite kings is identified especially with the so-called Myth and Ritual School led by S.H. Hooke and the Uppsala School led by I. Engnell and G. Widengren. For refutation of the divine kingship idea in Israel see K.-H. Bernhardt, Das Problem des Altorientalischen Königsideologie im Alten Testament (1961). This work contains an extensive discussion of the literature on divine kingship up to the time of its publication. For a summary of Bernhardt's wide-ranging criticisms of the divine kingship idea in Israel see pp. 303-306. See also G. Cooke, "The Israelite King as Son of God," ZAW 73 (1961), pp. 202-225; H. Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods (1948), pp. 337-344 (though Frankfort proposes too "secularized" an understanding of Hebrew Kingship); A.R. Johnson, "The Hebrew Conception of Kingship," Myth, Ritual, and Kingship (1958), esp. pp. 230-231, (Johnson was originally an advocate of divine kingship); and M. Noth, "God, King, and Nation," The Law in the Pentateuch and other Studies (1966), pp. 155-174.



2 Sam. 7.<sup>1</sup> The historicity of 2 Sam. 7, and its literary priority vis-à-vis Ps. 89 need not concern us here.

On the surface, the origin of the divine sonship of the Davidic kings is traceable to the oracle delivered by Nathan the prophet to King David when God rejected David's offer to build him a temple. Yahweh, speaking through the prophet Nathan, declared to David:

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. . . . I will be his father, and he shall be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rods of men, with the stripes of the sons of men; but I will not take my steadfast love from him. . . . And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever (2 Sam. 7.12-16; cf. 1 Chr. 17.13; 22.10; 28.6).

Because the oracle assured the eternal continuation of David's kingdom and throne, the filial relation with God bestowed on David's immediate successor was passed on to the whole dynasty. The Father-son relation described in the oracle was personal and ethical, with God promising to act as a disciplining but loving Father. From the Davidic point of view the connection with God implied privilege and obligation: the privilege of divine guidance and protection, but also the obligation of obedience to God. The history of the Davidic kings, as we possess it, is mainly one of their failure to live up to the demands of their special relationship with God. The historical collapse of the Davidic dynasty in the sixth century B.C., coupled with the promise of an enduring kingdom for David through his descendants, provided the foundation for the later Messianic expectation which was so prevalent at the time of Christ.

A second Old Testament passage, Ps. 89, contains a poetic expression of the Davidic covenant and projects the Father-son relation promised by God on to David himself rather than his descendants.<sup>2</sup> According to Ps. 89.26-27, David, the chosen and anointed servant of Yahweh, is entitled to address God as Father and is promised the preëminence of the status of firstborn. God declared of David:

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<sup>1</sup>On the covenantal character of 2 Sam. 7 see R. Clements, Abraham and David Genesis XV and its Meaning for Israelite Tradition (1967) pp. 53-55.

<sup>2</sup>On the composite character of Ps. 89 see E. Lipinski, Le Poème Royal du Psaume LXXXIX 1-5. 20-38 (1967), pp. 22-23.



He shall cry to me, 'Thou art my Father,  
my God, and the Rock of my Salvation.'  
And I will make him the first-born,<sup>1</sup>  
the highest of the kings of the earth.

The covenant between David and God insures the dynasty in Ps. 89.19-37, but unlike 2 Sam. 7 God's love and covenant faithfulness are reserved for David himself (vss. 28-37). This Psalm, at least in its present form, reflects the faithlessness of the Davidic kings who as a result of their moral and religious failure did not merit the fatherly love and compassion of Yahweh. For this reason, the Father-son connection with God is focused on David to the exclusion of his descendants.<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps because of the focus on David that Ps. 89 played no role in the Messianic thought of the New Testament.

Psalm 2, in contrast to Ps. 89, is of crucial significance for the Son of God Christology of the early church. Recent research has tended to describe Ps. 2 as a royal coronation Psalm,<sup>3</sup> and G. von Rad, for one, thinks vs. 7b is "a paraphrase of the substance of the Davidic covenant."<sup>4</sup> It is precisely vs. 7 which is of vital interest for the Son of God Christology. The Davidic kings declared on their coronation day:

I will tell of the decree of the Lord:  
He said to me, 'You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you.'

While no exact parallels have ever been discovered for the use of  $\text{בִּעַט}$  (beget) in vs. 7b, the expression apparently constituted an adoption formula which had the effect of legitimizing the new king as the successor of David and as the recipient of the promises made to David.<sup>5</sup> The early church saw in Ps. 2.7 a prophecy of Christ's

<sup>1</sup>The term used for "first-born"  $\text{בְּרִיךְ}$ , is the same one applied to Israel in Ex. 4.22 and Ephraim in Jer. 31.9, and as in these passages, probably means nothing more than that David has an exalted position before God.

<sup>2</sup>The writer of Ps. 89.38-51, who was not the author of vss. 19-37, confuses the distinction made between David and his progeny in vss. 19-37. He reverts to the understanding of 2 Sam. 7.11-16, excluding, however, the original limitation of that material to Solomon.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. M. Dahood, Psalms 1-50 (1965), p. 7; G. Fohrer, History of Israelite Religion (1973), p. 147; and S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh (1956), p. 78.

<sup>4</sup>G. von Rad, "The Royal Ritual in Judah," The Problem of the Hexateuch and other Essays (1966), p. 228.

<sup>5</sup>See Cooke, "Israelite King," p. 215; Mowinckel, He That Cometh,



divine sonship as its quotation in Acts 13.33; Heb. 1.5; and 5.5 and possible allusions to it elsewhere indicate.<sup>1</sup>

One further Old Testament passage, Ps. 110, requires brief comment. The New Testament frequently testifies that this royal psalm was given a Messianic interpretation with primary interest centering in vs. 1:

The Lord says to my lord:  
'Sit at my right hand,  
Till I make your enemies your footstool.'

The writer of Hebrews, in common with others, employed vs. 1, but he also used vs. 4 and developed his high-priestly Christology around it.<sup>2</sup> However, vs. 3 of the Psalm may contain an allusion to the divine sonship of the Davidic kings. The Masoretic text as it stands is practically unintelligible,<sup>3</sup> but the Septuagintal translation (Ps. 109) mentions the birth of one begotten by God: "ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἐωσφόρου ἐξεγέννησά σε." A number of scholars think that the Septuagint is a more faithful preservation of the original reading of the Psalm than the Masoretic text.<sup>4</sup> Whether this is the case or not, Ps. 110.3 does not appear to have been quoted with reference to Christ's Sonship until the time of Justin Martyr.<sup>5</sup>

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p. 78; and A.R. Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (1967), pp. 128-129.

<sup>1</sup>On the use of Ps. 2.7 and the idea of divine begetting of the Messiah in early Christianity see E. Schweizer, "The Concept of the Davidic 'Son of God' in Acts and its Old Testament Background," Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Paul Schubert (1966), pp. 186-193.

<sup>2</sup>See D. Hay, Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity (1973), for a comprehensive treatment of Ps. 110 in the New Testament and early Christianity. His indices IA and IB pp. 167-168 provide a complete list of quotations and allusions to Ps. 110.1 and 4 in the New Testament and early church.

<sup>3</sup>See Cooke, "Israelite King," pp. 219-222 for an extensive discussion of the various emendations which have been suggested for the Masoretic text of Ps. 110.3 in an attempt to make sense of the verse.

<sup>4</sup>The crucial problem in the Masoretic text is whether  $\text{ךָ אֵלֶּיךָ}$  (the noun  $\text{אֵלֶּיךָ}$  with the second masculine singular suffix  $\text{ךָ}$ ) was the original reading or whether the letters  $\text{ךָ אֵלֶּיךָ}$  formed a first person verb with second singular suffix ( $\text{אֵלֶּיךָ}$ ). Those preferring the LXX reading assume the latter was the case, e.g. Cooke, "Israelite King," p. 222; Johnson, Sacral Kingship, p. 131; and Mowinckel, He That Cometh, pp. 62, 67.

<sup>5</sup>Hay, Psalm 110, p. 22. He suggests that the Christians of the New Testament period neglected Ps. 110.3 "because they knew that its meaning (and form) were disputed and because they could find other scriptural texts to support ideas of Jesus' divine sonship (notably Ps. 2.7; 2 Sam. 7.14)."



Although there was not much Old Testament material available for the early church's designation of Jesus as the Son of God,<sup>1</sup> the early Christians found a basis for their belief that Jesus was the Son of God in the Messianic interpretation of Ps. 2.7 and 2 Sam. 7.14.

### 3. The Palestinian Jewish Background Of the Son of God Designation

Until the discovery of the Qumran material and its subsequent partial publication, the question whether the Messianic Son of God idea had any place in first century Palestinian Judaism before the emergence of Christianity or not had long been debated. Writing near the turn of the century, Gustav Dalman maintained that in pre-Christian Palestinian Judaism no association was provable between Messianic thinking and the "Son of God" title.<sup>2</sup> This assumption was next taken up by W. Bousset in Kyrios Christos.<sup>3</sup> Bousset admitted that it was only after some hesitation that he fully accepted Dalman's thesis, but having accepted it, he attributed the creation of the designation "Son of God" to Hellenistic Christianity under the influence of Hellenistic pagan conceptions.<sup>4</sup> Since the days of Dalman and Bousset, a number of other scholars of quite differing persuasions

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<sup>1</sup>The contention of Von Rad, "Royal Ritual," pp. 222-231 and A. Alt, "Jes. 8, 23 bis 9, 6. Befreiungsnacht und Krönungstag," Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel 2 (1953), pp. 206-225, among others, that Is. 9.6 contains a reference to divine sonship is doubtful. The "son who is given" must be understood in terms of the Immanuel prophecy of Is. 7.14 and the coming shoot from the stump of David in Is. 11.1. Against the interpretation of Von Rad and Alt see E. Hammershaimb, Some Aspects of Old Testament Prophecy from Isaiah to Malachi (1966), pp. 25-27 and J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (1962), pp. 368-369.

<sup>2</sup>G. Dalman, The Words of Jesus Considered in the Light of Post-Biblical Jewish Writings and Aramaic Language (1909), pp. 271-272.

<sup>3</sup>Bousset, Kyrios Christos, pp. 91-98.

<sup>4</sup>Bousset, ibid., p. 97 summarizes his position in this way: "Where the title 'Son of God' comes to undisputed dominance, that is, in the area of popular conceptions in the Gentile Christian church and in that of the Pauline-Johannine Christology, there are bound up with it conceptions of a kind in part primitively mythological, in part speculatively metaphysical; and these simply have nothing more to do with Jewish-primitive Christian messianology." See above for Bousset's contribution to the "Hellenization" of the designation "Son of God."



have accepted the accuracy of Dalman's analysis.<sup>1</sup>

The scepticism regarding the use of the designation "Son of God" in a Messianic way in Palestinian Judaism prior to and during the New Testament period was justifiable. The only references to be found in Palestinian apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature were (and are) suspect on various grounds. 1 Enoch 105.2, which has God saying, "For I and my Son," is not in the Greek text which probably goes back to the Semitic original, and therefore its appearance in Ethiopic Enoch indicates that it is an interpolation.<sup>2</sup> The term filius meus occurs in the Latin version of 4 Ezra (2 Esdras) on five occasions (7.28; 13.32, 37, 52; 14.9), but it is widely believed that this goes back to a Greek  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  which translated an original Hebrew  $\text{בְּנִי}$ .<sup>3</sup> In the Testament of Levi 4.2 Levi is called

<sup>1</sup>J. Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus (1963), pp. 72-73; W.G. Kümmel, "Das Gleichnis von den bösen Weingärtner (Mk. 12, 1-9)," Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte: Gesammelte Aufsätze 1933-1964 (1965), pp. 215-216; and Taylor, Person of Christ, pp. 173-174. E. Lohse, " $\text{ὁ υἱός κτλ.}$ ," TDNT 8, p. 361, claims that there is no evidence to support the use of the title "Son of God" for the Messiah in pre-Christian Judaism. He does not count 4Q flor. 1.11-13 as counter evidence to this assertion. Even though the actual quotation "he shall be my son" is part of a Biblical quotation, the immediate and explicit connection of the statement with the coming seed of David justifies the belief that this is a titular use of the "Son of God" designation with Messianic expectation. This is especially the case since the Qumran understanding of 2 Sam. 7.10-14a as Messianic requires ignoring the plain reference to Solomon. It is presumably the logic of Lohse which allows Kümmel, in Theology, p. 74 to insist, "'Son of God' was not a Jewish designation of the hoped for bearer of salvation, as the total absence of this designation in Jewish tradition shows." For our discussion of 4Q flor. 1.11-13 see below.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Jeremias, Parables, p. 73, n. 86; Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 282; and Lohse, " $\text{ὁ υἱός}$ ," p. 361.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the references in n. 2 supra. The thesis of the original  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  goes back to B. Violet, Die Apokalypsen des Esra und Baruch in deutscher Gestalt (a work we have not seen). Recently, S. Gero, "'My Son the Messiah': A Note on 4 Esr. 7.28-29" ZNW 66 (1975), pp. 264-267, on the basis of a Georgian version which goes back to a Greek original and reads "elect" in 4 Ezra 7.28, argues that the original version had  $\text{בְּנִי}$  in 7.28. The term in late Hebrew and Aramaic, he maintains, could mean either "son" or "elect." This hypothesis would account for some of the variation in the various versions still extant and would undercut Violet's argument for the Latin filius going back via a Greek  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  to a Hebrew  $\text{בְּנִי}$ . Unfortunately the Georgian version is not extant for chapters 13 and 14. Nothing in the context of 4 Ezra makes  $\text{בְּנִי}$  intrinsically more probable than  $\text{בְּנִי}$  understood either as "son" or "elect." R. Longenecker,



a Son of God and in 17.2 he is given the privilege to speak to God "as to a father."<sup>1</sup> The Testament of Judah 24.3 has divine Sonship in a Messianic context. The work of M. de Jonge makes reference to these passages as witness to pre-Christian Judaism exceedingly doubtful.<sup>2</sup> The Rabbinic literature, with its antipathy for the divinity of Christ, not surprisingly affords only very meagre evidence for a correlation between Messiahship and Sonship.<sup>3</sup> The oldest known connection occurs in a Baraitha from bSukka 52a which refers Ps. 2.7 to the Messiah son of David. A few further references are found in material from the age of the Amoraean.<sup>4</sup> The very limited amount of material and its age precludes its use in establishing the use of the Messianic "Son of God" designation in first century Palestinian Judaism.

The writings discovered in the caves of Qumran have decisively changed matters. In 4Q Florilegium, 2 Sam. 7.10-14 is quoted in an abbreviated form and is then accompanied with a Midrash which goes as far as 2 Sam. 7.14a. The crucial passage, 4Q flor. 1.11, reads as follows: אֲנִי [אֶל] ה' אֵלֹהִים לֹא לִי אֵל אֲדָרְבָּי וְהוּא יְהוָה לִי לְבָרֵךְ הוּא אֵל עֲלֵי כָל בְּרָכָה. Clearly 2 Sam. 7.14a is given a Messianic interpretation. The Midrash proceeds to explain that the Seed of David will appear in Zion with the expounder of the law at the end of the age, at which time the fallen house of David will be restored to save Israel (4Q flor. 1.11-13). The

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The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity (1970), p. 94, n. 140 calls for a reassessment of Violet's thesis in light of 4Q flor. Gero's study makes this all the more pressing.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. W. Grundmann, "Sohn Gottes: Eine Diskussionsbeitrag," ZNW 47 (1956), pp. 113-133 who tries to use the evidence in Test of Lev. to prove the idea of a Messianic High Priest who was designated "Son of God."

<sup>2</sup>See M. de Jonge's The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (1953); idem, "Christian Influence on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," NT 4 (1960), pp. 182-235; and idem, "Once More: Christian Influence on the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," NT 5 (1962), pp. 311-319. Fragments of a proto-Test. of Levi have turned up at Qumran, but they represent a much longer text than the one we possess. From all that we can discover, none of the Sonship passages are contained in the fragments that have been recovered.

<sup>3</sup>For a discussion of the Jewish protest against the church's Christology, see Schoeps, Paul, pp. 160-167.

<sup>4</sup>For references see Lohse, "ὁ υἱός," p. 362 and Strack-Billerbeck 3, pp. 19ff.



designation "Son of God" is employed in the quotation and then is juxtaposed with the Messianic term "Seed of David." The divine Sonship of the Messiah is in keeping with the royal usage of the Old Testament. This passage from 4Q flor. has led R.H. Fuller to assert that "son of God was just coming into use as a Messianic title in pre-Christian Judaism, and was ready to hand as a tool for the early Christians to use in interpreting Jesus of Nazareth."<sup>1</sup>

A second text from Qumran may provide a further piece of evidence for the connection between Messiahship and divine Sonship in pre-Christian Palestinian Judaism. 1 QSa 2.11f., part of the Messianic rule, may refer to the Messiah being begotten by God. The passage with restorations reads as follows: [מִן הַיְּהוָה] אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ [אֵלֶיךָ] יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ [אֵלֶיךָ] יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

One of the difficulties in employing this as evidence for the Messianic application of the Son of God idea is immediately apparent. The key words 7'7' and 7X are conjectures from a mutilated text. Nevertheless, the restorations seem appropriate in the context and make sense.<sup>2</sup> G. Vermes, however, argues that "the phrase as it stands-- 'When God shall beget the Messiah'--is meaningless unless the begetting of the Messiah was an established metaphor for the public appointment of Israel's royal savior."<sup>3</sup> But the fact that this very thing is said in Ps. 2.7, a passage closely related to 2 Sam. 7.14, a Messianic text at Qumran, is sufficient grounds for such a statement being made regarding the Messiah, however it may have been interpreted.<sup>4</sup>

The absence hitherto of evidence for the titular employment of the "Son of God" designation in first century Palestine may soon be altered though not without controversy.<sup>5</sup> In an unpublished

<sup>1</sup> Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 32. Cf. Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 282 and Longenecker, Christology, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. O. Michel and O. Betz, "Von Gott gezeugt." Judentum Urchristentum Kirche (1960), pp. 11-12 and J. Fitzmyer, Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament (1974), passim (see 1QSa 2.11f. in the index for pages).

<sup>3</sup> G. Vermes, Jesus the Jew (1973), p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Michel and Betz, "Von Gott gezeugt," pp. 11-12.

<sup>5</sup> The following is dependent upon J. Fitzmyer, "The Contribution of Qumran Aramaic to the Study of the New Testament," NTS 20 (1973-74), pp. 391-394. J.T. Milik's views have never been published and so we are dependent on Fitzmyer for his views. Apparently Fitzmyer has had access to the document through a public lecture by Milik in 1972 in which he passed out to the audience a provisional English translation with the Aramaic text.



Qumran document, 4Q ps Dan A<sup>a</sup> (=4Q 243), the titles "Son of God" and "Son of the Most High" appear, but they are not linked with the title "Messiah." J.T. Milik, the scholar who is responsible for the eventual publication of 4Q 243, restores the fragmentary text in a manner which leaves the Sonship titles referring to the Seleucid king Alexander Balas. The crucial line necessary to make this connection, however, is completely absent (the text being mutilated at this point). Milik's interpretation is based almost totally on his reconstruction of a non-existing line. Noting the apocalyptic character of the text, J. Fitzmyer restores the lacunae of the text in a way which designates the Son of the great enthroned king as the Son of God (𐤇𐤍𐤅𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕) and Son of the Most High (𐤍𐤏𐤔𐤕𐤕𐤕). Fitzmyer's tentative reconstruction appears far less arbitrary than Milik's. He is also able to show a close verbal correlation between phrases in 4Q 243 and Lk. 1.32, 33 and 35, part of Luke's Messianic birth narrative. Fitzmyer is surely correct when he insists:

No matter what interpretation of this text will eventually prove to be acceptable, there is no doubt that the Aramaic titles 𐤇𐤍𐤅𐤓𐤕𐤕𐤕 and 𐤍𐤏𐤔𐤕𐤕𐤕, as applied to some human being in the apocalyptic setting of this Palestinian text of the last third of the first century B.C., will have to be taken into account for any future discussions of the title used of Jesus in the New Testament.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence, though meagre, indicates that both the idea of the Messiah's special Sonship relation to God deriving from the old Davidic covenant and the actual title "Son of God" were known in Palestinian Judaism of pre-Christian times. The evidence is insufficient to determine how widespread the Sonship-Messiahship connection and the title "Son of God" were, especially since we only know of it from the sectarian texts of Qumran. The bits and pieces of evidence we have from the Old Testament and Qumran make the essence of the High Priest's question in Mk. 14.62, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?" at least a possibility within first century Judaism. The development of the Son of God Christology in the early church with its emphasis on the unique relation between Jesus the Messiah and God, his Father, was possible within the context of the Palestinian Jewish environment.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 393. The absence of a Messianic connection for the Sonship titles need not cause too much amazement. The document dates from the mid-second century B.C. Its outlook should correctly be compared with the Book of Daniel where the apocalyptic hope is not yet expressed in Messianic terms.



#### 4. Non-Messianic Divine Sonship In Palestinian Judaism

In his important book, Jesus the Jew, which was previously referred to, G. Vermes introduces another possible piece of evidence for the use of the designation "Son of God" in Palestinian Judaism.<sup>1</sup> He argues that certain esteemed charismatics and rabbis were called sons of God. The miracle worker Honi (Onias) is said to have prayed to God, "I am like a son of the house before thee" (M. Taanith 3.8), and both Hanina ben Dosa and Rabbi Meir were spoken of as "my son" by a voice from heaven (bTaan. 24b; bBer. 17b; bHul. 86a; bHag. 15b). In the cases of Hanina and Meir, as well as Rabbi Akiba, Satan was reputedly aware that they possessed a special status before God and showed proper deference in his treatment of them. Hanina, because of his special favor with God, was even able to limit the activity of evil demons. On the basis of this evidence, especially the material concerning Hanina, Vermes concludes that "it may be argued that the greatest and no doubt earliest, part of the Synoptic evidence concerning the divine sonship of Jesus corresponds exactly to the image of the Galilean miracle-worker Hasid."<sup>2</sup>

The material adduced by Vermes is very interesting and offers a challenge to the belief that the miracle-working tradition of the Gospels is derived from the Hellenistic theios aner idea; however, Vermes' position has its own difficulties. He brings together disparate rabbinic traditions giving the impression that the special status Hanina and Meir possessed before God was conceived as divine sonship and that this sonship was acknowledged by Satan and his cohorts. This connection seems to have been made by Vermes, not the documents. In other words, Vermes builds the profile of the "Galilean miracle-working Hasid" who possessed the special status of divine sonship, but whether the divine sonship of such men as Hanina and Meir ever went as far as Vermes implies is doubtful. Palestinian Judaism, like Diaspora Judaism, held the view that

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<sup>1</sup>Vermes, Jesus the Jew, pp. 202-210.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 209.

righteous and faithful Jewish people were sons of God as individuals and consequently were entitled to address God personally as Father.<sup>1</sup> The designation of an individual as "my son" by a heavenly voice was intended undoubtedly as an honor, but sonship was not the unique possession of such an individual.

## 5. The Historical Jesus and

### The Son of God Designation

The apostle Paul reproduces in Rom. 1.3-4 what is by all accounts a very early confessional formula in which the divine Sonship of Jesus is juxtaposed with a declaration regarding his Davidic descent, that is, his Messiahship. The question we wish to pursue in this section is whether or not the early church's identification of Jesus as the Son of God has any basis in the life and ministry of the historical Jesus. The complexities and extent of the Gospel material related to this problem preclude a full discussion of the matter here through an examination of all the relevant texts and their tradition-histories. What we hope to do in the next few pages is show that a strong possibility exists that Jesus understood himself to be the Son of God in a special sense.

For many years now it has been recognized that the Gospel tradition preserves important information regarding the Sonship of Jesus quite apart from an explicitly Messianic conception of Sonship. The key is Jesus' intimate relationship with God whom he considered to be his Father in a special way and whom he addressed with the intimate term Abba.<sup>2</sup> The prayers of Jesus are the place to begin in attempting to pursue this theme. The prayers of Jesus and particularly the Abba address in Mk. 14.36 attests that Jesus had an unusual, if not unprecedented, sense of relationship with God.

The Synoptic Gospels contain only a few prayers of Jesus, in

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Sirach 4.1-10; 51.7-10. (originally written in Hebrew in Palestine), Ps. Sol. 13.8; 17.30; Aboth, 5.20; Mekilta Bahodesh, 6 on Ex. 20.6.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. G. Kittel, "Ἰησοῦς," TDNT 1, p. 6. R.H. Fuller, The Mission and Achievement of Jesus (1954), pp. 80-86. B.M.F. van Iersel, "Der Sohn" in den Synoptischen Jesusworten (1961), pp. 93-116 and J.D.G. Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit (1975), pp. 11-40.



all, six, including the prayer Jesus taught his disciples (Mt. 6.9-13 Par. Lk. 11.2-4), though this prayer undoubtedly reflects the prayer practices of Jesus himself. The remaining five prayers are the prayer of Gethsemane (Mk. 14.36 par. Mt. 26.39, 42 and Lk. 22.42), the prayer of thanksgiving (Mt. 11.25-26 par. Lk. 10.21), the two prayers in Luke from the cross (Lk. 23.34, 39), and the cry of desolation (Mk. 15.34 par. Mt. 27.54). With the exception of Mk. 15.34 and its parallel, which quote from Ps. 22.1, these prayers unanimously agree that Jesus addressed God as Father, a fact affirmed by the Gospel of John (cf. Jn. 12.27; 17.1, 5, 11).<sup>1</sup>

The evangelist Mark preserves the idiomatic Aramaic word for father, אבבא (ܐܒܒܐ), in the Gethsemane prayer (Mk. 14.36). Both Matthew and Luke translate אבבא into Greek: Mt. 26.39, 42 renders it πᾶτερ μου, while Lk. 22.42 has the simple vocative πᾶτερ. Matthew and Luke, if they are dependent on Mark, avoid the transliteration of the Aramaic אבבא (אבבא). Since Mark has only one other prayer, the cry of desolation, a non-Father prayer, it is not surprising that Abba has not been preserved elsewhere in the Synoptic tradition. Nevertheless, Abba was probably the normal form of address used by Jesus in his prayers. Two pieces of information strongly point to this conclusion. In the first place, the Aramaic Abba was preserved in the traditions of the Greek-speaking church (Mk. 14.36, Gal. 4.6 and Rom. 8.15). This indicates that the word was thought to have special significance, to be an unusual and memorable word. The most reasonable explanation for its retention in the Greek speaking church is that Jesus himself addressed God with the term and taught his disciples to do likewise. The exceptional character of Abba as a term for addressing God in the environment of first century Palestinian Judaism led to its preservation.<sup>2</sup> The second piece of evidence supporting the claim that Jesus used Abba for addressing God is found

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<sup>1</sup>Even when account is taken of the multiplication of Father sayings of Jesus in the Gospel tradition, it is still safe to assume that the word Father was Jesus' favorite designation for God, a fact which stands in contrast to the paucity of references to God's Fatherhood in rabbinic literature.

<sup>2</sup>The radical form critic, N. Perrin, Rediscovering the Teachings of Jesus (1967), p. 41 accepts the authenticity of Abba on the lips of Jesus precisely because it admirably conforms to his "criterion of dissimilarity."



in the various witnesses to the Syriac version of the Gospels. (Syriac is an Aramaic dialect distinct from Palestinian Aramaic.) The Palestinian Aramaic word ܐܒܐ appears on a number of occasions precisely in the prayer addresses of the Syriac version of the Gospels.<sup>1</sup> The form ܐܒܐ, however, did not exist in classical Syriac.<sup>2</sup> This suggests that when the Gospels were translated into Syriac the already existing oral Gospel tradition dictated that the Palestinian Aramaic ܐܒܐ be used in the prayer addresses of Jesus, rather than the Eastern Syriac ܐܒܐ which corresponded to the imperial Aramaic address for father.<sup>3</sup>

The careful research of J. Jeremias has made clear the significance of abba.<sup>4</sup> First, and foremost, abba was a family word used by children, young and old alike, to address or speak of their fathers. It implied intimacy and warmth, respect and trust. Later, by extension, it was employed as a respectful address for old men, but all of the available evidence indicates that abba was never used in prayer address to God and was only seldom used of God otherwise.<sup>5</sup> Vermes disputes this claim on the basis of b. Taan. 23b which he maintains shows "that for the charismatic, as for Jesus, God is Abba!"<sup>6</sup> This assertion cannot survive critical scrutiny because the only example Vermes adduces is clearly exceptional. When Hanin,

<sup>1</sup>W. Marchel, Abba, Père! La Prière du Christ et des Chrétiens (1971<sup>2</sup>), pp. 133-134 has two very helpful tables setting out where Abba occurs in the Syriac witnesses.

<sup>2</sup>M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts (1967<sup>3</sup>), p. 283 and J. Jeremias, The Prayer of Jesus (1967), pp. 64-65.

<sup>3</sup>Marchel, Abba, pp. 136-137.

<sup>4</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 58-59 with respect to the origin and development of Abba, maintains: "In origin, abba is a pure exclamatory form, which is not inflected and which takes no possessive suffixes; the germination is modelled on the way in which a child says imma to its mother. . . . This form abba, deriving from children's speech, had made considerable headway in Palestinian Aramaic in the period before the New Testament. Abba first supplanted the 'Imperial Aramaic' and biblical-Hebraic form of address abhi all along the line; . . . In addition, abba took over the non-vocative use of the form with the first person singular suffix and replaced the emphatic state abba; abba can also stand for 'his father' and 'our father'." Cf. also Kittel, "אבא", pp. 5-6; and Marchel, Abba, pp. 107-108.

<sup>5</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 60-62, 108-112; and Marchel, Abba, pp. 110-112.

<sup>6</sup>Vermes, Jesus the Jew, p. 211.



the grandson of Honi the Circle Drawer, spoke of God as an Abba he was merely using a figure of speech based on the address of some children to himself. His own address to God was a properly deferential "Master of the World." Dunn maintains that Jeremias' conclusions must be qualified for a different reason:

It is not in fact true that we have no examples of a Jew saying "my father" to God. I am thinking here particularly of Ecclus. (Ben Sira) 23.1, 4: that the Greek πάτερ is like the πάτερ of Jesus' prayers (except Mark 14.36) and denotes a sense of intimate trust, is strongly suggested by Ecclus. (Ben Sira) 51.10. We cannot therefore maintain that Jesus' use of abba was unprecedented [his emphasis].<sup>1</sup>

The matter is not quite as clear cut with regard to Sirach as Dunn implies. In the first place Sirach nowhere contains the expression "my Father" in relation to God. In fact Sir. 23.1, 4 does not even suggest intimacy with God since he is addressed as "Lord, Father, and Master of my life" (vs. 1) and "Lord, Father, and God of my life" (vs. 4). Dunn's appeal to Sir. 51.10 to show the intimacy with which God's Fatherhood was experienced is also misleading for Sir. 51.10 actually says, "I called upon the Lord, the Father of my lord . . ." This almost sounds like a Christian interpolation, but regardless of this, it is not evidence for an intimate sense of the Fatherhood of God, at least not for the person doing the praying. These observations show that Dunn has failed to support his assertion, "We cannot therefore maintain that Jesus' use of abba was unprecedented," from the evidence which he adduces.<sup>2</sup>

The fact is that God was only rarely addressed as Father in Palestinian Judaism of the first and second centuries of the present era.<sup>3</sup> Jeremias is probably correct when he maintains of abba: "to the

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, p. 23. Dunn offers a second qualification based on an observation by Conzelmann but then proceeds to effectively explain it away.

<sup>2</sup>H. Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament (1969), pp. 103-105 has registered several more objections to Jeremias' position, but these are adequately refuted by I.H. Marshall, The Origins of New Testament Christology (1976), p. 59, n. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 24-26. He does qualify this view by saying that the address אֱלֹהֵינוּ which occurs in a few later prayers, may go back to the first century A.D. since this is the Matthean address of the Lord's Prayer. It should also be born in mind that the sources available do not provide information about non-liturgical prayers; so the address "Father" may have been more frequent than now appears. Cf. D. Flusser, Jesus (1969), pp. 144-145, n. 159.



Jewish mind it would have been disrespectful and therefore inconceivable to address God with this familiar word."<sup>1</sup> From the rabbinic point of view abba would have tended to compromise God's transcendence. It is no accident that almost everytime the word Father is employed with respect to God in rabbinic Judaism, it is qualified by the expression "in heaven" or attested in expressions like the prayer address "my Father, my King."

The unusual character of Jesus' use of Abba in addressing God leads to the conclusion that Jesus intentionally chose to address God as Abba because it conformed to the nature of his intimate relationship with God, an unusual, if not unheard of intimacy. The simple Abba used by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane was typical of his prayer life and suggests the degree to which he had completely entrusted himself to the fatherly care of God throughout his life.<sup>2</sup> But this raises two crucial questions: 1) Did Jesus consider himself to be Son of God in a special or even unique sense differing from the sonship status which he possessed as a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or even the sonship relation which he might possess as a particularly righteous and holy man (Vermes)? 2) Does the Gospel tradition suggest that the roots of later Sonship Christology are to be found in the life and ministry of the earthly Jesus? While complete certainty in these matters can never be attained, the answer to both of these questions appears to be yes.

In the first place, the Synoptic Gospels reveal that Jesus distinguished between his own relation with God and the relation of his disciples. This is most clearly brought out in the implicit contrast between the use of "my Father" and "your Father" in the Gospel tradition. It is not possible to enter into a treatment of the complex problem of the "Father" traditions in the Gospels here. However, when due regard is given to the tendency to multiply Father sayings, both of the "my Father" and "your Father" types, evidence still exists to suggest that Jesus differentiated between his own

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, p. 62. Cf. Kittel, "Ἀββᾶ," p. 6 and Marchel, Abba, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup>Although Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 18-20 has recently made out a good case for the historicity of the Gethsemane account, the authenticity of Abba in the prayers of Jesus stands whether the authenticity of Mk. 14.36 is accepted or not.



relation with God and that of his disciples through the use of "my Father" and "your Father."<sup>1</sup> This fact alone indicates that Jesus conceived his own relation with God to be different from that of his disciples. It implies an awareness of special Father-Son connection with God. Perhaps even more importantly with regard to showing the special Sonship relation Jesus had with God, Jesus included his disciples in this special relation with God. As R. Bauckham has recently noted:

Jesus did not confine his use of Abba to himself, but also admitted his disciples, ordinary men with little claim to special holiness, to share his filial relationship, teaching them to address God as Abba. To contemporaries this must have been more startling even than Jesus' own use of the term.<sup>2</sup>

The point Bauckham is making is that the disciples' sonship relation with God seems to have derived from the special relation Jesus had with God, a clear indication of the conscious "uniqueness" of Jesus' own Sonship.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus' consciousness of his own special Sonship relation with God comes out in various Synoptic Gospel texts, though none are of undisputed authenticity. We may look at one example of supreme importance, however, which we believe has a very strong claim to authenticity. According to Mt. 11.27 (par. Lk. 10.22), Jesus purports to be the Son of God, the unique revealer of the Father: "All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and whom the Son wishes to reveal him." German scholars, in particular, have frequently regarded the Q-saying in Mt. 11.27 as a Hellenistic revelation saying,<sup>4</sup> but a number of scholars have

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<sup>1</sup>For the evidence for this see Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 38-54. Our own independent research into the matter has confirmed the correctness of Jeremias' study in general terms. On this see below pp. 280ff.

<sup>2</sup>R. Bauckham, "The Sonship of the Historical Jesus in Christology," SJT 31 (1978), p. 248. He supports this claim by arguing that Jesus taught the disciples to pray Abba in the Lord's Prayer. This is very probably correct. In support of this position see the references in Bauckham's essay p. 248, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. also Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 24-26, 38.

<sup>4</sup>E.g. Bousset, Kyrios Christos, pp. 84-91. M. Dibelius, From Tradition to Gospel (1971), pp. 279-284; R. Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, (1963), p. 160; and W.G. Kümmel, Promise and Fulfilment. The Eschatological Message of Jesus (1961<sup>2</sup>), p. 41.



shown this to be an unwarranted assumption.<sup>1</sup> The verse, in fact, has a very good claim to authenticity since, as Jeremias has demonstrated: "Language, style, and structure clearly assign the saying to a Semitic-speaking milieu," and the logion has an "intrinsic connection . . . with the way in which Jesus addressed God as 'Abba.'"<sup>2</sup> The decisive question is whether Jesus would have stated the claims of vs. 27 in the manner in which they are set forward there. The πάντα Jesus maintained he had received in vs. 27 were not unrestricted authority and power as in Mt. 28.18,<sup>3</sup> but complete knowledge and understanding of the will of God, a view confirmed by παραδιδόναι which usually refers to the passing on of teachings or traditions. That Jesus should attribute the "passing on" of knowledge to his Father is not in the least surprising given the sense of intimacy he felt towards God as his Abba. The Father-Son formulation in the reciprocal knowledge assertion is a possibility on the lips of Jesus for the same reason. The early church was interested in Jesus' Sonship for dogmatic reasons and therefore could have had an interest in formulating Mt. 11.27.<sup>4</sup> But when Jesus' belief in a special Father-son relation with God is acknowledged, as it must be, then the major reason for withholding the

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. W.D. Davies, The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount (1964), pp. 206-208; Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 45-48; van Iersel, Der Sohn, pp. 146-157; M.J. Suggs, Wisdom, Christology and the Law in Matthew's Gospel (1970), pp. 91-95; and Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 27-34.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 45-48. See also his New Testament Theology 1 (1971), pp. 56-59. He further points out parallels to the mutual knowledge statement in Judaism, thus removing one of the primary "Hellenistic" features. Jeremias (pp. 47-51) argues that the phrase "No one knows the son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the son" should be understood as a simile from the relationship between human fathers and sons: "Just as only a father really knows his son, so only a son really knows his father." The problem with this interpretation is that the generic saying discovered by Jeremias makes no sense as an everyday simile; it simply is not true that only a father and a son truly know each other.

<sup>3</sup>Contra Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 312.

<sup>4</sup>Hahn, ibid., p. 312 thinks a "Christological narrowing" has taken place in Mt. 11.27 in which access to the Father only becomes possible through Jesus. The evidence of the Gospels suggests the opposite. Man's access to God was contingent upon acceptance of the message of Jesus. The acceptance of his message implied the acceptance of the authority of the messenger. Cf. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 133, n. 20.



sayings from the historical Jesus is removed.<sup>1</sup> Part of Jesus' self-consciousness was his belief that he was the Son of God in an unprecedented sense and enjoyed unique knowledge of God his Father which he alone could impart to men. Mt. 11.27 is in all probability an authentic statement of this fact. But even if this passage and other possibly authentic Sonship sayings like Mk. 12.1-9 and 13.32 should prove to be unauthentic, it would still be necessary to posit a sense of special Sonship on Jesus' part<sup>2</sup> in order to account for the way in which he spoke of God as Abba and distinguished between his own relation with God and that of his disciples, while at the same time drawing them into relation with the Father similar to his own.

In connection with the two questions raised above, one final factor needs to be mentioned which supports the "yes" we proposed. If Jesus considered himself to be the Messiah of Israel, albeit in a highly interpreted sense, then he immediately had a special claim to a unique Father-Son relationship with God based on the prophecy of 2 Sam. 7.12-16 which, as we have seen, was applied to the coming Messiah son of David by the Qumran community. Many scholars in the twentieth century have been sceptical about the place of Messiahship in the life and ministry of Jesus, but this historical scepticism is itself questionable on the basis of the Gospel tradition and our knowledge of first century Palestine.<sup>3</sup> The place of Messiah-

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 32-34, after his thorough survey of the evidence for authenticity over against the assertion of its later formulation by the Church, remains undecided. Given Dunn's understanding of Jesus' special sense of Sonship and the general character of Jesus' ministry, it appears to us a more logical position to assume the verse's authenticity, though this would imply Jesus' unique Sonship, a thing Dunn is unwilling to do. In contrast to Dunn see D. Catchpole, The Trial of Jesus (1971), pp. 145-147 who concludes: "Mt. 11.27 is to be taken as a genuine saying of Jesus, coherent with the Abba complex and providing private explanation of what went unexplained in public [i.e., the basis of Jesus' distinctive message]."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Vermes, Jesus the Jew, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup>Among those regarding the Messianic character of Jesus' life with scepticism are such scholars as R. Bultmann, Theology I, pp. 26-32; Dibelius, Tradition to Gospel, p. 223; G. Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth (1960), pp. 171-172; Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, pp. 138-140, also 129-130; and Vermes, Jesus the Jew, pp. 140-156. An equally formidable list of scholars sceptical of "historical scepticism" on the point in question could be put together. It would include Cullman, Christology, pp. 117-133; Kllmml, Theology, pp. 66-73; V. Taylor, The Gospel According to Mark (1952), pp. 122-124 and passim; T.W. Manson, "Realized Eschatology and the Messianic Secret," Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R.H. Lightfoot (1955), pp. 209-222; and O. Betz, "Die Frage nach dem messianischen Bewusstsein Jesu," NT 6 (1963), pp. 20-48.



ship in the life and ministry of Jesus is too complicated to treat in detail in the confines of this work. Nevertheless two factors may be isolated which indicate that Messiahship did play a role in the life of Jesus even if he did not use the title during his ministry.

Jesus very clearly seems to have had a "Messianic consciousness." To begin with, the Spirit was one of the marks of the coming Messiah in Jewish thought of Jesus' day according to Psalms of Solomon 17.42 (cf. 11Q Melchizedek 18), a reference probably derived from the common Messianic interpretation of Is. 11.1-5. The material in the Gospels regarding the Spirit is not plentiful, but Dunn has shown that Jesus' consciousness of the power of the Spirit in his life was a fundamental datum of his religious experience.<sup>1</sup> In light of current Messianic expectations, Jesus could have understood this as a mark of his Messiahship.<sup>2</sup> One of Jesus' boldest claims was the prerogative to forgive sins (Mk. 2.1-12 and Lk. 7.36-50).<sup>3</sup> The Damascus Rule of Qumran pronounces the forgiveness of sins as one of the works of the anointed of Aaron and Israel, that is, of the end time Messianic figures (CD 14.19). It is not possible to prove that the views of Qumran were widespread and that Jesus understood his Messiahship in Qumranian terms, but the similarities between Jesus' ministry and the expectations of Qumran, more of which will be mentioned, suggest that a common Messianic expectation existed in first century Judaism. At the very least, Jesus' forgiveness of sins points to the age of salvation which he himself was involved in ushering in. From the Jewish point of view the age of salvation was the Messianic age and the bringer of salvation was the Messiah (cf. Ps. Sol. 17 and 18).<sup>4</sup> Jesus'

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 41-67. Cf. also Professor Barrett's The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition (1966<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. W.C. van Unnik, "Jesus the Christ," NTS 8 (1961-62), pp. 114-115 and Professor Barrett, Holy Spirit, pp. 118-120, though in light of Professor Barrett's views in Jesus and the Gospel Tradition (1967), pp. 19-24 and 28-30 it is not certain that he still holds his earlier views.

<sup>3</sup>Jeremias, Theology 1, pp. 113ff. points out that Jesus' promise of the forgiveness of sins is deeply embedded in the Synoptic traditions in his parables and his intercourse with sinners. Cf. Professor Barrett, Jesus, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Jeremias, Theology 1, pp. 76-121. D. Aune, "The Problem of the Messianic Secret," NT 11 (1969), p. 29 says of the forgiveness of sins, "We may conclude that both in Qumran and in the consciousness of Jesus the forgiveness of sins was an eschatological act of God, administered by his representative par excellence, the Messiah."



attitude towards the Torah, especially as exemplified in his ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν and ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω sayings, is filled with Messianic pretension.<sup>1</sup> Qumran expected the Messiah of Aaron to interpret the Torah for the people of God, giving them new directions at the end of the age (CD 6.5-11; 7.18 and 4Q flor. 1.11).<sup>2</sup> The authoritative teaching of Jesus certainly parallels this type of expectation, and furthermore breaks through the bounds of traditional authority in first century Judaism—precisely because Jesus is his own authority. The possession of direct authority by Jesus which even contrasted with the authority of the prophets of old, who spoke in the name of God, indicates a consciousness of power which can only be conceived in Messianic terms. D. Aune has forcefully argued that "Jesus' ministry of seeking the lost can be understood in an eschatological sense in connection with his conscious Messianic ministry of proclaiming the glad tidings."<sup>3</sup> 11Q Melchizedek, 15ff. provides a Messianic interpretation of Isaiah 52.7 demonstrating that the preaching of glad tidings was expected of the Messiah. Jesus' activity in seeking the lost (cf. Mk. 7.17; Lk. 19.10) represented a taking up of the eschatological function of God in Ezek. 34.16-24, but this was a legitimate Messianic act since according to Ezek. 34.22-23 a descendant of David "would stand in the place of God."<sup>4</sup>

The Messianic features of Jesus' ministry and their parallels in contemporary Jewish Messianic expectation cited in the previous paragraph in no way exhaust the possibilities. Reference could also be made to the Messianic character of Jesus' saying about the temple, his entry into Jerusalem, his exorcisms, and so on.<sup>5</sup> It is impossible to psychoanalyze Jesus, but the clear implication of the evidence from his ministry is that he acted the part of a Messianic figure. That this was accidental on his part is hardly conceivable. It therefore

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<sup>1</sup> Davies, Sermon on the Mount, pp. 430-432 and E. Käsemann, "The Problem of the Historical Jesus," Essays on New Testament Themes (1964), pp. 37-38, but also pp. 43-44.

<sup>2</sup> See Davies, Sermon on the Mount, pp. 147ff. and R.S. van der Woude, "Χρίω κτλ," TDNT 9, pp. 518-519.

<sup>3</sup> Aune, "Messianic Secret," p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-28. Aune has here developed a suggestion of Betz, "Messianische Bewusstsein," p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> See Aune, "Messianic Secret," pp. 21-31; Betz, "Messianische Bewusstsein," pp. 34-43; and J.D.G. Dunn, "The Messianic Secret in Mark," Tyndale Bulletin 21 (1970), pp. 101-110.



seems probable that Jesus had a "Messianic consciousness" about his ministry, though it is obvious that he did not understand his Messiahship in political terms but in terms of suffering and service.<sup>1</sup>

Without necessarily being the source of Jesus' Sonship consciousness, his Messianic self-perception provides an obvious point of contact with the theme of Sonship. To the extent that Jesus viewed himself as the promised Messiah, he had a right to the Sonship relation promised to David's descendants in 2 Sam. 7.12-16. 4Q flor. shows conclusively that this passage from 2 Sam. was interpreted Messianically in the first century, and so it is entirely possible that Jesus assumed the Sonship statement of 2 Sam. 7.14-15 applied to him and his relationship with God. In this way it would have provided a rationale for his intimate behavior towards God as his Abba, even though his consciousness of a unique Sonship relation with God may not have been tied exclusively to his awareness of Messiahship.

Quite apart from the matter of Jesus' Messianic consciousness, one other factor in the Gospel tradition, directly connected to the problem of Jesus' Messiahship, offered a basis for the development of the early church's Sonship Christology. According to the passion narratives, Jesus was crucified as a Messianic pretender. The Romans undoubtedly took him to be a pretender to kingship (Mk. 15.26) since Messiahship would not have meant much to them. The passion narratives unanimously agree, however, that the process was not begun by the Romans but by the Jewish leaders. The tendency may have existed in the tradition to place an ever increasing burden of guilt upon the Jews, but Paul, quite independently tells us the Jews were responsible for Christ's crucifixion (1 Thess. 2.15) and Josephus certainly implies as much (Antiquities 18.64). Very probably, the charge of Messianic or royal pretension, from the Jewish point of view the two would be synonymous, originated with the Jewish leaders.<sup>2</sup> The trial narratives

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. C.F.D. Moule, The Origin of Christology, pp. 32-35. We are inclined towards the conclusions of Moule when he avers: "it seems to be closer to the evidence to say, not that Jesus refused or even postponed the claim to be Messiah, but, rather, that, where offered the title, he reinterpreted it, and, if he ultimately claimed it, did so only in a reinterpreted form. This is an absurdly old-fashioned conclusion, but the question is whether it does not fit the evidence. It would explain, as nothing else seems to, the ready use of the title by the Christian community . . ."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Van Unnik, "Jesus the Christ," pp. 109-111; Dunn, "Messianic Secret," pp. 107-110; and O. Betz, What Do We Know about Jesus? (1968), pp. 92-93.



pose a number of historical problems,<sup>1</sup> but a trial or a hearing or both took place before the Jewish leadership in all probability. A trial would have taken place before the Sanhedrin while a hearing might only have included the high priest and some of his close advisors. The finding of the trial or hearing must have been to the effect that Jesus was a Messianic pretender or at least concluded this was the best grounds for condemning him before Pilate.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, and in light of current Messianic expectation, the high priest's question in Mk. 14.61 and Jesus' reply in vs. 62 may well be authentic in their essence, if not in their present forms.<sup>3</sup> That

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<sup>1</sup>On the problem of the historicity of the trial narratives compare P. Winter, Trial of Jesus (1961) and Catchpole, Trial of Jesus; see also the latter's "The Problem of the Historicity of the Sanhedrin Trial," The Trial of Jesus: Cambridge Studies in Honour of C.F.D. Moule (1970), pp. 47-65.

<sup>2</sup>The question of why Jesus' supposed Messiahship should have led to his condemnation by the Jewish leaders is difficult to answer. See J.C. O'Neill, "The Charge of Blasphemy at Jesus' Trial before the Sanhedrin," The Trial of Jesus: Cambridge Studies in Honour of C.F.D. Moule (1970), pp. 72-77 and especially Catchpole, Trial of Jesus, pp. 126-148 and passim. Catchpole argues that the Lukan trial narrative (22.54-71) is to be preferred to the Marcan (14.55-64). From this he favors the conclusion that Jesus was condemned for claiming to be the Son of God rather than for specific Messianic pretension. In our view he incorrectly plays down the connection between Messiahship and divine Sonship in first century Judaism. He also fails to provide sufficient reason to show why the arrogation of the title "Son of God," if not Messianic in character, should lead to condemnation when the Old Testament clearly recognized the divine sonship of the people of Israel. The ancient rabbinic tradition found in b Sanhedrin 43a suggesting that Jesus was condemned for being a mesith (false prophet and sorcerer), may have some truth to it. Cf. F.F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament (1974), pp. 55-57 and Catchpole, Trial of Jesus, pp. 7-11, 44-47, and 61-64.

<sup>3</sup>O. Betz, "Messianische Bewusstseins," pp. 34-37 has shown that the issue of the destroying of the temple, which played a part in the trial of Jesus (cf. Professor Barrett, Jesus, pp. 57-58), was at least a Messianic question. If Jesus had claimed he would destroy and rebuild the temple (which certainly appears to be the case, cf. Mk. 14.58, 15.29; Mt. 26.61; 27.40; Jn. 2.19; Acts 6.14), this could have been construed as evidence of his Messianic claim. The failure of the witnesses to prove the matter may well have led to the high priest's direct question regarding Jesus' Messiahship and an affirmative answer by Jesus. Cf. Dunn, "Messianic Secret," p. 108 and Kümmel, Theology, pp. 70-71. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 110 accepts the authenticity of the question, but denies it for Jesus' response. The fact that in the Dead Sea scrolls the title "Son of God" occurs and 2 Sam. 7.14 is applied Messianically gives support to the possibility that the high priest may have asked Jesus if he was "the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed."



Jesus admitted his Messiahship during the trial seems entirely possible since he possessed a Messianic self-consciousness.

To the extent that the early church recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the crucified Messiah of Israel, it had a clear basis for ascribing to him a special Sonship relation with God,<sup>1</sup> quite apart from his own consciousness of a special Sonship connection with God. This is exactly what seems to be behind Rom. 1.3-4.

By way of summary, the evidence of the Gospel tradition shows that Jesus had a self-consciousness of his own unique Sonship. By virtue of his Messianic self-perception, a Scriptural justification (2 Sam. 7.14-15) for his unique relation with God was readily available, though Jesus' Sonship cannot simply be made a sub-category of his Messiahship. The earliest Christian community was undoubtedly aware of Jesus' own claim to a unique Sonship relation with God and was able to support this claim by appealing to the Sonship relation which the Messiah was to have with God.<sup>2</sup> But even when account is taken of these factors, we are still short of the Sonship conception which Paul has of Jesus. To further clarify the background of the apostle's thought on this matter, we must turn to the Hellenistic Jewish background of Sonship.

## 6. Hellenistic Jewish Thought and The Son of God Designation

Hellenistic Jewish thought developed several ideas in relation to divine Wisdom and the divine Logos which have a bearing on the Son of God concept in Paul's Christology, ideas like pre-existence, mediation in creation, sending into the world, and the image of God. These categories, however, have an existence quite independent of divine Sonship language, though Philo connects several of them to his conception of the divine Logos, firstborn son of God. For this

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Klausner, Jesus to Paul, p. 478 who acknowledges that the Messiah is "'son of God' . . . to a greater extent than the rest of the children of Israel."

<sup>2</sup>On the possible connection between the Son of God and the Son of Man in Jesus' thought and experience see the provocative treatment by Moule, Origin of Christology, pp. 22-31. Cf. also W.R.G. Loader, "The Apocalyptic Model of Sonship: Its Origin and Development in New Testament Tradition," JBL 97 (1978), pp. 525-554.



reason, rather than enter into a full discussion of these ideas at this time, we shall only mention them as they relate to the language of divine sonship in Philo, delaying the principal discussion of them until the following chapters where their connection with Pauline thought may be dealt with more thoroughly.

The actual occurrences of divine sonship language having any importance for the early church's Christological reflection are very limited in Hellenistic-Jewish writings. One passage which some scholars think is important is Wis. 2-5. In Wis. 2.12-20 the righteous man is depicted as one who "professes to have knowledge of God and calls himself a child (παῖς) of the Lord" (vs. 13). Because he is righteous, he calls God his Father (vs. 16). His righteousness arouses the enmity of Jewish renegades (cf. vs. 12) who decide to put him to the test to see if he is God's son (υἱὸς θεοῦ) on the assumption that God will deliver him if he is in fact his son (vs. 18). The righteous man is to be condemned and shamefully put to death in order to see if God will protect him (vss. 19-20). In the judgment the righteous man will stand in the presence of his adversaries and be numbered among the sons of God (ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ) to the consternation of his opponents whose condemnation is sure (4.20-5.5).

On the basis of this material from Wis. 2-5, R.H. Fuller has suggested that the term "Son of God," when transferred from its original Palestinian environment "assumed wider aspects derived from the Hellenistic Jewish concept of the son of God as the righteous man."<sup>1</sup> He thinks this was then used in conjunction with the earthly existence of Jesus. K. Berger, in several articles, has independently developed the idea of a connection between the Christological designation "Son of God" and the Wisdom tradition, especially Wis. 2, 5 and 7.<sup>2</sup> He claims in his most recent essay on the subject:

Der Titel 'Sohn Gottes' könnte demnach primär weisheitlichen Ursprungs sein und sich für die Evangelien inhaltlich auf den Empfang singulärer γυναικὸς θεοῦ bzw. Offenbarung Jesu vom Vater beziehen. Da traditionell auch einem solchen Sohn Gottes himmlisches Königtum und Gericht über seine Feinde zukommt, war hier ein Ansatzpunkt gegeben, dass man national-messianische Erwartungen in bestimmter Interpretation auch in diesem Sohn Gottes

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<sup>1</sup> Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 72. See pp. 68-72 for his complete discussion.

<sup>2</sup> K. Berger, "Zum traditionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund Christologischer Hoheitstitel," NTS 17 (1970-71), pp. 422-424; idem, "Die Königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments," NTS 20 (1973-74), pp. 1-44; and idem, "Zum Problem der Messianität Jesu," ZTK 71 (1974), pp. 1-30.

erfüllt sehen konnte.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, Berger believes the title "Son of God" was derived from the Wisdom tradition of Hellenistic Judaism and then, because of certain prior affinities with the idea of Davidic royalty, namely, the fact that Solomon was the recipient of divine Wisdom (cf. Wis. 7, 9), was related to the royal Messianic tradition of Judaism before being embodied in the Gospels.<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that both Fuller and Berger are reacting against the imposition of the theios aner idea on the Gospels and find in the righteous man as the son of God an alternative for explaining the Son of God Christology in the Gospels.

The similarities between the experience of the righteous man in Wis. 2-5 and the Synoptic portrayal of Jesus are undeniable. But, of course, Wis. 2-5 is based on Old Testament ideas. It is widely held that these chapters are closely related to Dt. Is. and that the suffering righteous man is a figure based on the suffering servant.<sup>3</sup> This means that the parallels between the Gospels and Wisdom do not necessarily indicate dependence by the former on the latter. Besides, the outline of the life, death, and resurrection of the historical Jesus form the basis for the Gospel's presentation, not the suffering righteous man in Wis. 2-5. It is possible that certain features in the Gospels are explicable in terms of the righteous son of God in

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<sup>1</sup>Berger, "Messianität Jesu," p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>To a large extent the views of Berger on Wisdom are already found in G. Ziener, Die theologische Begriffssprache im Buche der Weisheit (1956), though Berger makes no mention of this. Ziener sought to revive the view of the post-Apostolic period to the rise of critical investigation, that the righteous man in Wis. 2.12-20 is to be understood Messianically (see pp. 116-118). Nothing in the context of Wis. 2-5 indicates its author had a Messianic figure in mind, and despite Ziener's protests to the contrary, there is no reason to see a disjunction between the "righteous poor man" of 2.10 and the "righteous man" of 2.12ff. His claim that the singulars of 2.12-20 refer to "dem Gerechten," the Messiah, and that the plurals of 2.22 and 3.1-9 refer to "den Gerechten," the community of the Messiah, makes unnatural distinctions in the text. His list of parallels between Ps. 88 LXX and Wis. 2.12ff. are also unconvincing. If one already believes Jesus to be the Messiah, Son of God, and knows the basic outline of Jesus' life, then a Messianic reading of Wis. 2.12-5 is possible. This is undoubtedly why the Church Fathers understood Wis. 2.12-5 in Messianic terms, but there is nothing in the text itself that would suggest such an identification. Cf. W. Grundmann, "Sohn Gottes, ein Diskussionsbeitrag," ZNW 47 (1956), pp. 122-123.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, pp. 66, 71; M.D. Hooker, Jesus and the Servant (1959), pp. 53-54; C.R. North, The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah (1948), p. 8; J. Suggs, "Wisdom of Solomon 2.10-5: A



Wis. 2-5, as Berger suggests,<sup>1</sup> but this is a long way from proving that the Christological title "Son of God" originated in the Wisdom tradition. It has already been shown that the designation "Son of God" had a place in the life of Jesus. If this is correct, Berger's thesis is unnecessary from the very beginning. Apart from this, Berger's circuitous explanation for the origin of the Christological title "Son of God" are problematic on other grounds. In the first place, "Son of God" is not a title in Wisdom of Solomon,<sup>2</sup> or for that matter in any other Wisdom literature. Its application to individuals is derived from the corporative sonship of Israel and is therefore descriptive of the special relationship between God and his people or God and the righteous man.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the connection which Berger attempts to make between the righteous man as son of God and the royal figure of the wise man Solomon is unconvincing because in Wisdom there is no relation between the suffering righteous man in ch. 2-5 and Solomon himself.<sup>4</sup> Contrary to what Berger seems to imply,<sup>5</sup> there is not even a Father-son type relation between personified Wisdom and Solomon or Wisdom and the righteous. Finally, despite Berger's protests,<sup>6</sup> the early tradition embedded in Rom. 1.3-4 proves that from a very early date Davidic descent and divine Sonship existed

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Homily Based on the Fourth Servant Song," JBL 76 (1957), pp. 29ff.; and J. Jeremias, "παῖς," TDNT 5, p. 684. See Jeremias for a list of parallels between Is. 52.13-53.12 and Wis. 2.12-5.

<sup>1</sup>E.g. Berger, "Königlichen Messiastraditionen," p. 16 claims Wis. 2.18 has affected the language of the temptations and the taunt at the crucifixion (Mt. 27.40). For the most part, we are not convinced by his examples since the passages are capable of alternative explanations. In the case of Mt. 27.24, for example, Matthew has merely conformed the taunt of the bystanders to the charges at the trial (Mt. 26. 60-64).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Wis. 9.6; 11.10; 12.19, 21; 16.19, 21, 25-26; 18.4; Sir. 4.1-10.

<sup>4</sup>Berger, "Königlichen Messiastraditionen," pp. 16-17. He assumes that the righteous man of Wis. 2-5 is synonymous with the wise man, but in the section 1.16-5.23, which deals with the righteous vis-à-vis the ungodly, the righteous are never referred to as wise men. In fact, reference to wisdom is all but absent, occurring only in 3.11.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 33-34.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-18.

together in the Christological thought of the church, and thus they were not brought together as the product of a complicated synthesis of ideas.

While the views of Fuller and Berger regarding Wis. 2-5 may have some relevance for explaining features in the Gospel traditions, they are inadequate for explaining the origin of the Christological title "Son of God" (Fuller does not actually attempt to use the idea in this way.) Their views also do not appear to have any real bearing on the Son of God concept in Paul.

Far and away the most important background material from Hellenistic Judaism which bears directly on Christological divine Sonship in Paul occurs in Philo Judaeus, the famous Jewish philosopher from Alexandria. He employs divine Father-son language in a variety of ways,<sup>1</sup> but its application to the Logos is of special interest. According to Philo, the Logos is "the child of parents incorruptible and wholly free from stain, his Father being God, who is likewise Father of all, and his mother Wisdom, through whom the universe came into existence " (Fuga, 109). Philo gives the Logos a place of preëminence in creation, for he says of it:

[The] Incorporeal one, who differs not a whit from the divine image . . . is the eldest son (πρεσβύτατος υἱός), whom the Father of all raised up, and elsewhere calls His first-born (πρωτόγονον), and indeed the son thus begotten followed the ways of his Father, and shaped the different kinds, looking to the archetypal patterns which the Father supplied (Conf. Ling., 62-63; cf. Agric., 51; Fuga, 112.)

The Logos, first-born son of God, serves as a sort of mediator between God the Father and men who are not yet ready to be called sons of God (Conf. Ling., 145-147). The idea of mediation is graphically stated in another passage: "For he who has been consecrated to the Father of the world must needs have that Father's Son with all his fullness of excellence to plead his cause, that sins may be remembered no more and good gifts may be showered in rich abundance " (Vit. Mos. II, 134; cf. Fuga, 108-109).<sup>2</sup> For anyone familiar with the Son of God concept in the New Testament, the similarities between

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<sup>1</sup>See E. Schweizer, "υἱός κτλ.," TDNT 8, pp. 355-356 for a brief account of the diversity of usage in Philo.

<sup>2</sup>"The Father's Son" in this quotation is the "world," but in Philo the Logos is identified as the world of ideas (cf. Deus Immut. 31-32). Thus this passage seems to refer to the mediation of the Logos before God. Cf. Hengel, Son of God, p. 52. Hengel is undoubtedly correct in his criticism of B.L. Mack, Logos und Sophia (1973),



Philo's Logos and the pre-existent heavenly Son of God are obvious, though this is not to say that the New Testament in any way was dependent upon Philo. In fact, many of the attributes of Philo's Logos are elsewhere in Jewish literature attributed to Wisdom. The important point is that within Jewish thought categories like pre-existence, existence in the divine image, and so forth were used and help to explain how the Son of God idea could develop in Christological reflection. Their specific relationship to Pauline Christology will be taken up in the chapters which follow.

The only other source having any significance for the background of divine Sonship of Christ is the Hellenistic Jewish romance Joseph and Asenath. The patriarch Joseph is called the son of God several times (6.2, 6; 13.10), and at one point is designated ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ πρωτότοκος" (21.3). Joseph possesses an indwelling light which marks him off from other humans and inspires fearful reverence from people (6.2-6). He is said to be a saviour (25.5). In many respects Joseph breaks through the bounds of human existence in Joseph and Asenath,<sup>1</sup> but this is due to the fact that he is a divine angel in the form of a man or a symbol for a divine principle (perhaps the Logos) in the same way that Asenath is a symbol for divine Wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

#### D. Summary

The proposition that Sonship Christology, and in particular Paul's, should be understood in terms of various Hellenistic conceptions has been seen to be without foundation. The true background for the early Church's belief in the Sonship of Christ is to be found within Judaism and the Gospel tradition itself. The Old Testament spoke of the descendant of David who would have a special Sonship relation with God. The Qumran community interpreted this passage Messianically. It also appears that the designation Son of

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pp. 167 ff. who claims that "die Bezeichnung des Logos als Sohn und Eikon Gottes ist von der Horus-Mythologie her zu verstehen." As Hengel says, "All attempts to interpret Philo predominantly in terms of a single cause (Egyptian mythology, theology of the mysteries, gnosticism, Old Testament and Judaism) are misleading and do not do justice to the complex synthetic character of Philo's thought" (p. 52, n. 103).

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schweizer, "υἱός," p. 356, n. 134.

<sup>2</sup>M. Philonenko, Joseph et Aséneth (1968), pp. 86-87.

God was used as a title at Qumran for some figure. Although it is impossible to psychoanalyze Jesus, it does appear that his relation with God was unusual to say the least. His use of Abba for addressing God reflects an unheard of intimacy with God. When this is connected with the fact that he probably purported to have special knowledge of God as a Son (Mt. 11.27) and taught that his disciples' sonship relation with God derived from his own, we must admit that we are confronted with a unique Sonship consciousness on the part of Jesus. The Messianic Sonship understanding of contemporary Judaism grounded Jesus' Sonship consciousness because he apparently saw himself as the Messiah. Because he was recognized as the Messiah by the early church, an obvious basis existed for developing Sonship Christology. But the Sonship consciousness of Jesus and the conception of Messianic Sonship is not adequate for explaining a number of features of Pauline Sonship Christology including pre-existence and εἰκῶν thought. Hellenistic Judaism provides the background for understanding these. Berger, however, is wrong in suggesting that Wis. 2-5 had a significant influence on the Son of God Christology.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD

The first group of Sonship passages to be examined are those where Paul identifies his Gospel as the Gospel concerning God's Son. The reason for beginning with these texts, as opposed to those which speak of the Son of God coming into the world, is that they provide a framework for understanding all of the other Sonship texts in Paul. That Paul describes his Gospel as the Gospel of God's Son suggests from the very outset that Sonship was of fundamental importance in his mind. Gal. 1.15-16 and Rom. 1.1-4 are of special significance. In the former, the preaching of the Son is related to Paul's experience on the road to Damascus—the heavenly revelation which he received at his conversion and call to apostleship. This offers a decisive starting point for the very reason that it purports to be Paul's own starting point. Rom. 1.1-4 is of interest for a somewhat different reason. By almost everyone's reckoning, Rom. 1.3-4 represents a pre-Pauline confessional formula which Paul has taken up and modified. By examining this text it may be possible to detect some of the ways in which Paul went beyond the beliefs of the earliest Christian community with respect to Christ as God's Son. In connection with Gal. 1.15-16 and Rom. 1.1-4, Rom. 1.9 and 2 Cor. 1.19 are of value because they stress that Paul's description of the Gospel as concerning God's Son was a characteristic description of the Gospel for Paul. The full significance of this, however, can only be appreciated when all of Paul's Sonship texts have been examined.

#### A. The Revealing of the Son of God and the Content of Paul's Gospel: Gal. 1.15-16

Paul, in a decisive context in Galatians designed to establish

both his apostolic authority and the genuineness of the Gospel preached by him,<sup>1</sup> makes two important claims concerning the Son of God. He claims in Gal. 1.16 that God had revealed (ἀποκαλύψαι) his Son to him and that the Son of God who was revealed to him was the content of his Gospel. This potentially significant but typically unexplained assertion poses a very common problem for the exegete attempting to understand Paul. The context which appears to concern the conversion and apostolic call of Paul, the wording of the infinitive phrase ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, and the claim that Paul preached the Son of God,<sup>2</sup> suggest that vs. 16 may relate important insights into his theology and his conception of the Gospel. Unfortunately, Paul's exact meaning in Gal. 1.16 remains unexpounded in its current context because the statement of vs. 16 is incidental, or more accurately, subordinate to the main thought being developed by the apostle.<sup>3</sup> Yet the possible significance of the words and their implications for Pauline thought demand that the exegete seek to uncover what lies behind the bald assertion.

The words of Gal. 1.15-16 are of special interest to us not only because they make the Son of God the content of the Pauline Gospel but also because they assert that the Son of God was the content of the revelation which Paul received at the time of his conversion. In the exegesis which follows we hope to show both the significance of these two ideas and their relationship to one another.

### 1. Contextual Considerations

The passage in which Gal. 1.15-16 occurs begins in 1.11-12. In

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<sup>1</sup>K. Kertelge, "Apokalypsis Jesou Christou (Gal. 1,12)," Neues Testament und Kirche (1974), p. 266 correctly claims, "in der Auslegung des Galaterbriefes wird heute weitgehend angenommen, dass es Paul in Kap. 1 und 2 um die Gott-Unmittelbarkeit seines Evangeliums und den Erweis seiner von irdisch-menschlichen Instanzen unabhängigen apostolischen Autorität geht."

<sup>2</sup>Verse 16 actually says, "to reveal his Son in me in order that I might preach him (αὐτόν) among the Gentiles . . ." The "him" obviously refers to the Son of God and this conforms to what Paul says about the content of his Gospel in Rom. 1.1-4, 9; 2 Cor. 1.19.

<sup>3</sup>From a strictly grammatical point of view Gal. 1.15-16b constitute a subordinate temporal clause.



opposing the apparent claim or perhaps insinuation of his Judaizing opponents that his Gospel was a defective Gospel, because he failed to inculcate the law and circumcision along with salvation in Christ,<sup>1</sup> Paul maintains that the Gospel which he preached was neither κατὰ ἄνθρωπον, nor was it received παρὰ ἀνθρώπου, nor was it taught by men, but it was δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ. What follows in 1.13 to 2.10 is intended by Paul as evidence to establish the complete truth of his Gospel and his independent apostolic authority based on the divine origin of his Gospel and its acceptance by the most important figures of Jewish Christianity.

In vss. 13 and 14 Paul provides a brief personal account of his pre-Christian past (cf. 1 Cor. 15.9; Phil. 3.4ff.). He reminds his readers of his anti-Christian behavior and his earlier career as a zealous Jew in order to highlight the radical change in his life, a change explicable only through recourse to divine intervention.<sup>2</sup> In vss. 15-16 Paul refers to the divine intervention which changed the course of his life. Speaking in terms redolent of God's setting apart and calling of the servant in Deutero-Isaiah and the prophet Jeremiah,<sup>3</sup> Paul offers a theological reflection, brief though it may be, on his call to apostleship (which in this context presupposes his conversion).

The decisive issues for this study are the meaning of the infinitive phrase ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, what the apostle himself understood by it, and the experience which lay behind it. The infinitive ἀποκαλύψαι is grammatically the complement for the

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<sup>1</sup>For an extensive discussion concerning who Paul's opponents were see infra, pp. 296-303.

<sup>2</sup>J.H. Schütz, Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority (1975), p. 133 calls this a "biography of reversal."

<sup>3</sup>It is widely acknowledged that Paul's description of his divine setting apart from his mother's womb and call by God's grace to preach is modelled on or at least intentionally echoes Isa. 49.1-6 and Jer. 1.4-10, and perhaps other passages as well. Cf. L. Cerfaux, The Christian in Paul, pp. 84ff.; J. Munck, Paul and the Salvation of Mankind (1959), pp. 24ff.; Blank, Paulus, pp. 224ff.; and T. Holtz, "Zum Selbstverständnis des Apostels Paulus," TLZ 91 (1966), col. 321-330. O. Betz, "Die Vision des Paulus im Tempel von Jerusalem," Verborum Veritas (1970), pp. 117ff. thinks that if 1 Cor. 9.1; 15.8-10, and Gal. 1.12-16 are taken together the call of Isaiah in Isa. 6.1-13, "alle diejenigen Motive enthält" and "deren inner Logik enthüllt" (p. 118).

verb εὐδόκησεν in vs. 15. Its significance in the present context is crucial because it is impossible to discuss the content of the revelation without coming to terms with its meaning. It is therefore necessary to begin by discussing what the term "to reveal" means in Gal. 1.16.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Meaning of ἀποκαλύψαι

Recently D. Lührmann, in a thesis written under the supervision of G. Bornkamm, has emphasized the eschatological character of Paul's understanding of revelation. He attributes the eschatological character of ἀποκάλυψις-ἀποκαλύπτειν in Paul to the influence of Jewish apocalyptic thought.<sup>2</sup> Lührmann rejects the view that the noun ἀποκάλυψις in Gal. 1.12 and, by implication, the verb in vs. 16 concern a visionary experience of Paul which he then pitted against his opponents' understanding of tradition.<sup>3</sup> On the basis of the frequent

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<sup>1</sup>Roman Catholic scholars have frequently shown an interest in the tradition-historical relationship of Gal. 1.12, and 15-16 to Matt. 16.16-17, the revelation of Jesus' Sonship to Peter by God, and Matt. 11.25-27, the famous revelation saying of Jesus. See A.-M. Denis, "L'investiture de la fonction apostolique par 'apocalypse.' Etude thematique de Gal. 1,16," *RB* 64 (1957), pp. 335-362, 492-515; J. Dupont, "La révélation du fils de Dieu en faveur de Pierre (Mt. 16,17) et de Paul (Gal. 1,16)," *RSR* 52 (1964), pp. 411-420; Kertelge, "Apokalypsis," pp. 276-279; and F. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief* (1974), p. 90, (with further bibliography). With Mussner, we agree that "der Bericht über seine [Paul's] Berufung in Gal. 1.15f orientiert sich zudem nicht an der Berufung des Petrus, sondern an jener der atl. Propheten." The crucial expressions "revelation," "Son of God," and "flesh and blood" "verwendt Paulus auch sonst in seinen Briefen, brauchen also nicht auf irgendeine Abhängigkeit von Mt. 16,17 oder einer andern Tradition zurückgeführt zu werden."

<sup>2</sup>D. Lührmann, *Das Offenbarungsverständnis bei Paulus und in den Paulinischen Gemeinden* (1965). On Galatians 1.12 and 16 see pp. 73-81. On the larger problem of apocalyptic influence see especially pp. 98-108.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 74. G. Bornkamm, Lührmann's teacher, in "The Revelation of Christ to Paul on the Damascus Road and Paul's Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation," *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology* (1974), pp. 91-103 supplements Lührmann when he argues that Paul could not have obtained the basic information necessary for faith and proclamation in a mere vision of the resurrected Lord. Since others, including the original apostles, had experienced the risen Jesus, Bornkamm argues that Paul could hardly have "defended his special apostleship to the Gentiles on the bare ground of his being an eyewitness of the resurrection" (p. 94). He agrees with Lührmann that the key to understanding Gal. 1.12 and 15-16 is the origin of Paul's concept of revelation in apocalyptic thought. On this point he adds nothing further to Lührmann. See also Bornkamm, *Paul* (1975), pp. 18ff.



eschatological significance of the verb "to reveal" in Paul (Lührmann refers to Rom. 1.17f.; 8.18; 1 Cor. 2.10; 3.13; and Gal. 3.23), he claims that the eschatological significance must be assumed for ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16 where "die Offenbarung des Sohnes Gottes ist die eschatologische Zeitenwende."<sup>1</sup> Behind Gal. 4.4 (the sending of the Son) and Gal. 3.23 (the revealing of faith) Lührmann finds "das Zwei-Äonen-Schema der Apokalyptik" in which "der vergangene Äon war durch das Gesetz qualifiziert, der neue ist durch die Sendung des Sohnes eingeleitet (Gal. 4.4) und durch die πίστις (3.23) bestimmt."<sup>2</sup> He then urges that Gal. 1.16 must be interpreted within the framework provided by these passages, and thus in Gal. 1.16, as in 3.23, "Offenbarung ist für Paulus nicht das Christusgeschehen als solches, sondern die aus ihm resultierende Bedeutung für den Menschen, die Gott dem Menschen vermittelt."<sup>3</sup> Lührmann therefore concludes that the revelation of which Paul speaks in Gal. 1.12 and 16 is not concerned with Paul's apostolic office but with God's general revelation of the significance of the salvation events. This stands in opposition to the tradition of Paul's opponents. In a footnote he suggests that Paul himself introduced the idea of revelation in Gal. 1.12, 16 "um mit ihrer Hilfe sein 'Damaskuserlebnis' zu interpretieren."<sup>4</sup>

P. Stuhlmacher has offered a different approach to ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16.<sup>5</sup> While emphasizing the apocalyptic background of Paul's concept of revelation, he does not isolate the terms "revelation" and "to reveal" from Paul's visionary experience near Damascus. He argues that Gal. 1.15-16 indicates that "der Empfang des Evangeliums von Gott selbst bedeutet historisch, dass Gott selbst dem Paulus das Recht des gesetzesfreien Evangeliums

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<sup>1</sup>Lührmann, Offenbarungsverständnis, p. 75. Bornkamm, "Revelation of Christ," p. 96 makes the same claim when he argues that the change of aeons mentioned in Gal. 1.3-4 is made the "turning-point in the apostle's life" in Gal. 1.12ff. He goes on (p. 97) to maintain that the change of aeons in Christ is not restricted to Paul in Gal. 1.12, 16.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 77, n. 5.

<sup>5</sup>P. Stuhlmacher, Das paulinische Evangelium I. Vorgeschichte (1968), pp. 71-82.

der vorpaulinischen Missionsgemeinden bestätigt hat."<sup>1</sup> This view of Stuhlmacher's is important because it accounts for how a mere vision of the risen Jesus could have resulted in the origin of Paul's Gospel. In conformity with the meaning of revelation in apocalyptic literature, Stuhlmacher maintains that the term ἀποκάλυψις in Gal. 1.12 indicates that Paul's Gospel "sich um eine proleptische Enthüllung endzeitlicher Realitäten handelt."<sup>2</sup> This means that Paul's Gospel is a pre-description of a fact which will only become apparent at the end of the world.<sup>3</sup> For Stuhlmacher the catch-word (Stichwort) ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16 sketches what is meant in Phil. 3.8ff. by "the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ," in 1 Cor. 9.1 by "seeing Jesus," and in 1 Cor. 15.1ff. by "the appearing of the risen Christ." The parallelism between these passages and Gal. 1.15-16 leads to an important inference concerning Paul's Damascus experience, according to Stuhlmacher:

Es handelt sich bei der Paulus gewährten Epiphanie offensichtlich nicht nur um einen innerlich ablaufenden, gedanklichen Inspirationsprozess, sondern um ein der alttestamentlichen Jawetheophanie vergleichbares In-Erscheinung-Treten Gottes. . . . Paulus schildert also in Gal. 1.15f. die ihm zuteil gewordene österliche Epiphanie des Gottessohnes.<sup>4</sup>

The revealing of the Son of God mentioned in Gal. 1.15-16 means "das Sehenlassen des Auferstandenen als des von Gott inthronisierten und also zum Herrscher eingesetzten Gottessohnes."<sup>5</sup> Paul in this revelatory act of God was enabled then to perceive proleptically the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 71. Cf. H. Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater (1971), p. 55 who says of Gal. 1.16, "Der Vorgang, den Paulus an unserer Stelle beschreibt, erweist sich als ein Akt des Aufdeckens von etwas radikal Verborgenen. In der Offenbarung an den Apostel wird die eschatologische Enthüllung Christi (für den Apostel) vorausgenommen."

<sup>3</sup> Stuhlmacher, Evangelium, p. 80 puts it in the following way: "Das Wort der Botschaft verbindet das Geschehen des Endes mit der Offenbarung in der Gegenwart. Das offenbarende Wort ist also ein aus dem Ende der Zeiten in die Gegenwart hereineilendes und, antikem Denken entsprechend, durchaus dinglich--räumliches Geschehen, ein zeithafter 'Wort-Raum'."

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 81.



end-time Lordship, salvation, and righteousness of God.

Neither the views of Lührmann nor Stuhlmacher are completely satisfying with respect to the meaning of ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16,<sup>1</sup> though Stuhlmacher is much closer to the truth than Lührmann. In the first place Lührmann (like Bornkamm) is misdirected in his attempt to isolate the meaning of ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16 both from the visionary experience that Paul describes in 1 Cor. 9.1 and 15.8 (cf. Phil. 3.8ff.),<sup>2</sup> and from his call to his apostolic office. In both 1 Cor. 9.1 and 15.8-9 Paul juxtaposes statements regarding his vision of Christ and his apostleship. These two passages leave the distinct impression that Paul considered the appearing of the risen Jesus in his Damascus experience to be foundational for his apostleship.<sup>3</sup> Paul says in Gal. 1.15-16 that the revealing of the Son of God was ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. This ἵνα clause obviously refers to Paul's apostolic task as do the two participles ἀφορίσας and καλέσας in vs. 15 (cf. Rom. 1.1). Thus in Gal. 1.15-16, the revelation which Paul received at the time of his call is directly connected with his apostleship. Given the parallelism in thought between this passage and 1 Cor. 9.1 and 15.8-9 it is natural to assume that Gal. 1.15-16 refers to the same experience which Paul describes in 1 Corinthians as a "seeing" or "appearing" of the risen Jesus,<sup>4</sup> though this does not mean that the revelation consisted of only a "seeing" since there may have been

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schlütz, Paul, pp. 131-135 who seeks a mediating position between Lührmann and Stuhlmacher's understanding of revelation in Gal. 1.15-16.

<sup>2</sup>In 2 Cor. 12.1 the terms "vision" and "revelation" are placed side by side without being distinguished (cf. vs. 7). Professor Barrett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (1973), p. 307 suggests, "It could be argued that vision points directly to the thing seen, or the experience of seeing it, revelation to its intelligible content and its communication, but it would be unwise to build on this, and unnecessary, since Paul goes on to speak of the experience without defining it." From 2 Cor. 12.1-7 it seems clear that "revelation" may go hand in hand with a visionary experience.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 100-103; Professor Barrett, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (1968), pp. 200-201, 344; A. Robertson and A. Plummer, First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (1914<sup>2</sup>), p. 177.

<sup>4</sup>Others holding this view include Stuhlmacher, Evangelium, p. 76; Blank, Paulus, pp. 185ff.; Schlier, Galater, pp. 54-56; F. Mussner, Der Galaterbrief (1977<sup>3</sup>), pp. 83-84; U. Wilckens, "Die Bekehrung des Paulus als religionsgeschichtliches Problem," ZTK 56 (1959), p. 274; and Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, p. 98.

auditory communication as well (cf. 2 Cor. 12.1-4; Acts 9.4ff.; 22.6ff.; 26.12ff.).<sup>1</sup>

Lührmann is further mistaken in assuming that ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16 must be taken eschatologically on the basis of such passages as Rom. 8.18 and Gal. 3.23. He fails to note that in these passages, as well as the other passages designated by him as eschatological, the things revealed are always impersonal and the revelations in question are never made to single individuals. These fundamental differences between the supposed parallels and Gal. 1.15-16 demand that the former passages must not be made determinative for Paul's use of the verb "to reveal" in Gal. 1.16. Nothing in the immediate context of Gal. 1.11ff. indicates that Paul intended ἀποκαλύψαι in an eschatological sense in vs. 16, so the very idea that Paul conceived of or wished to convey that the revealing of God's Son to him constituted an "eschatologische Zeitenwende" in a personal sense or in some unspecified general sense (which is what Lührmann implies) is without foundation.<sup>2</sup> In a word, Lührmann's interpretation of Gal. 1.15-16 fails to convince because neither the word ἀποκαλύψαι nor the context allow, let alone demand, his explanation.

In several respects Stuhlmacher's views are preferable to Lührmann's, though in the end he makes a mistake similar to the most fundamental of Lührmann's errors. Stuhlmacher makes no effort to isolate the ἀποκαλύψαι of Gal. 1.15-16 from Paul's visionary experience. The traditional view that the revelatory experience of Gal. 1.12, and 15-16 is to be identified with 1 Cor. 9.1 and 15.8 is, as we have suggested in the criticism of Lührmann, very probable. He is also correct in equating Gal. 1.15-16 with Old Testament theophanic visions, though in this instance it is technically a

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. F.F. Bruce, Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit (1977), p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Lührmann's assumption that the two-age-scheme of apocalyptic underlying Gal. 3.23 and 4.4 must also apply to Gal. 1.15-16 is without foundation. These two passages do not in fact any more provide the context of Gal. 1.15-16 than any other remote passages in the letter. It is surely time to stop treating individual words as independent ideas which determine their contexts--the mistake of Lührmann in his explanation of ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16. Gal. 1.16 hardly counts for evidence that in a general way revelation means for Paul "die aus ihm (the Christ-event) resultierende Bedeutung für den Menschen, die Gott dem Menschen vermittelt," though the revelation in Gal. 1.16 may have this effect in Paul's life.



Christophany.<sup>1</sup> More will be said about the theophanic character of the apostle's conversion-call experience shortly. It also seems probable that the Damascus revelation did confirm to Paul the truth of the law-free Gospel.<sup>2</sup> The central problem with Stuhlmacher's interpretation is whether or not ἀποκαλύψαι signifies a "proleptic uncovering of an end-time reality." It may be true that the word "revelation" in Jewish apocalyptic literature sometimes concerns the anticipatory disclosure of the events of the end-time, though it is far from obvious that this is the only or even the most common use of the verb "to reveal" in apocalyptic literature (cf. 2 Baruch 54.4-7; 55.1-8; 56.1; Jub. 12.25; Enoch 38.3; 46.3; 61.5). The meaning of the term must be determined by individual contexts since "to reveal" cannot be shown to be a technical term with the meaning suggested by Stuhlmacher (or Lührmann for that matter.) Paul gives no indication that he considered the revelation of Gal. 1.16 as a proleptic perception of end-time realities. In fact, the content of the revelation, the risen Jesus as the Son of God, was, if anything, a very present reality for Paul. Thus, in the end, Stuhlmacher, like Lührmann imports foreign ideas into the text of Gal. 1.16, ideas which in reality distort rather than clarify Paul's meaning.

The main lines for interpreting ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.15-16 should now be clear. When Paul says it pleased God "to reveal his Son to me in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles" he has in mind the same personal experience which lies behind 1 Cor. 9.1 and 15.8. Paul considered this experience to constitute his call to his apostolic task, a factor implied in all three passages (cf. Gal. 1.1, Rom. 1.1). The actual term ἀποκαλύψαι does not here have identifiable eschatological or apocalyptic overtones. Its meaning, however, simply cannot be made synonymous with ἑώρακέναι in 1 Cor. 9.1 or ὀφθῆναι in 1 Cor. 15.8. Ἀποκαλύψαι in Gal. 1.16 implies at once the previous "hiddenness" of the object revealed and the making known of the significance of what was revealed (cf. 2 Baruch 54.6).<sup>3</sup> Paul

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 83-84 and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 126-339.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 85, n. 42 and bibliography cited there; Wilckens, "Bekehrung des Paulus," pp. 273-293; and J. Dupont, "The Conversion of Paul, and its Influence on his Understanding of Salvation by Faith," Apostolic History and the Gospels (1968), pp. 176-194.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the comment quoted from Professor Barrett in note 2, p. 73.

could describe his vision of the risen Jesus as revelatory in two senses. At one level the revelation given to Paul disclosed that Jesus was in fact risen from the dead. At a deeper level, however, it disclosed to him the significance of who Jesus was, namely, that he was the Son of God.

The importance of this disclosure can only be appreciated when we discover why Paul describes the content of the revelation given to him in terms of the Son of God and what he means by this.

### 3. "God's Son" as the Content of The Revelation Given to Paul

The fact that Paul chooses to specify that God revealed "his Son" to him in Gal. 1.16,<sup>1</sup> rather than describe the revelation in the more general terms of Gal. 1.12,<sup>2</sup> compels us to inquire concerning his choice of "his Son" to designate the content of the revelation given to him. Several different answers have been offered to this problem.

#### a. Some Possible Interpretations

Margaret Thrall starts with the assumption that Gal. 1.16 should be taken at face value: in some sense Paul did receive a revelation that Jesus was God's Son.<sup>3</sup> She doubts, however, that it was in the sense of his unique Sonship since, so far as is known, the pre-Pauline Palestinian church only believed that Jesus was the Messianic Son of God. Paul did come to believe in the unique Sonship of Jesus, but she finds no reason to trace this conception to Paul's

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<sup>1</sup>The prepositional phrase ἐν ἐμοί in vs. 16a has long troubled exegetes. Is it intended to indicate the intensive character of the revelation by emphasizing it took place within Paul's being? Cf. Schlier, Galater, p. 55 who maintains, "dass mit ἐν ἐμοί die Intensität der Enthüllung des Sohnes, die bis in das zentrale Leben des Apostels stattfand, zum Ausdruck gebracht wird." See also Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 86-87. Or does the phrase "in me" merely stand for the simple dative? Cf. A. Oepke, Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater, (1973), p. 61 who argues, "In der Koine vertritt ἐν häufig den einfachen Dativ, besonders bei Verben des Mitteilens usw. ἐν ἐμοί bedeutet hiernach 'mir.'" See also Blass-Debrunner-Funk, Sect. 220. Grammar alone is unable to decide the matter, but the former possibility seems preferable (cf. Gal. 2.20).

<sup>2</sup>"τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ . . . παρέλαβον . . . δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ"

<sup>3</sup>M.E. Thrall, "The Origin of Pauline Christology," Apostolic History and the Gospel (1970), pp. 308ff.



experience on the road to Damascus. Before his conversion, Paul knew that those who were Christians held Jesus to be God's Son; it was this faith which he attempted to eradicate. For this reason Dr. Thrall thinks: "the revelation on the road to Damascus may simply have convinced him that the title was, after all, correctly applied. The crucified Jesus of Nazareth was the messianic Son of God."<sup>1</sup>

On the surface this explanation is plausible, but on closer inspection it appears doubtful. In the second part of vs. 16 Paul identifies the Son of God, who was revealed to him, as the content of his Gospel (cf. Rom. 1.1-4, 9; 2 Cor. 1.19), but nowhere in his letters does Paul ever indicate he preached a "Messianic" Jesus. If he really understood the divine revelation given to him as a revealing of the "Messianic Son of God," it is strange that he went so far beyond such a "revealed" insight in the course of his ministry. The fact is that in Rom. 1.3-4 Paul probably corrects a "Messianic Sonship confession." If Dr. Thrall's theory were correct, it would pose the difficult problem of why and how Paul moved so far beyond the initial revelation given to him.<sup>2</sup> Because of this difficulty a different explanation seems necessary for Gal. 1.16.

A second possible approach to the content of the revelation being about God's Son is to derive the meaning of "Son of God" from its use elsewhere in Galatians and from the general Pauline usage. Following this approach, G. Bornkamm notes that in both Galatians and Romans where Paul deals with "law and grace, works and faith (cf. Gal.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 308. Cf. J. Eckert, Die urchristliche Verkündigung im Streit zwischen Paulus und seinen Gegnern nach dem Galaterbrief (1971), p. 177.

<sup>2</sup>Thrall, "Pauline Christology," pp. 312ff. thinks Paul apprehended Christ as Lord in the Damascus experience which in turn led to his belief that Christ was the agent of creation. She then posits that belief in the unique divine Sonship of Christ "may have evolved in Paul's mind through the assimilation of the υἱός concept to that of the divine κύριος" (p. 315). This leaves another problem. Is it likely that the Damascus vision would on the one hand merely reveal Jesus as Messianic Son of God and on the other hand as the Lord of creation in the Old Testament sense? It would seem that the vision, as portrayed by Thrall, had already broken open the traditional categories of Paul's Jewish thought. Cf. Schlier, Galater, p. 55 who claims, "Die Offenbarung Gottes an Paulus hat ein persönliches Objekt: Gott enthüllt ihm seinen Sohn. Damit ist hier der erhöhte Herr gemeint . . ." Schlier, however, does not clarify the relationship between these two ideas.

1:15f.; 2:20; 4:4. 6; Rom. 5:10; 8:3, 29, 32) . . . the use [Son of God] is connected with the thought of Christ's pre-existence."<sup>1</sup> But he insists: "At no point does Paul's use of the title 'Son of God' contain any reflection on Christ's divine nature per se before all time, or imply the thought of his supernatural birth."<sup>2</sup> "On the contrary," Bornkamm maintains, "it refers to the Incarnation; and, for Paul, that means at once that it refers to Jesus' death, through which he was to 'redeem those under the law, so that they might receive sonship' (Gal. 4:4f.)."<sup>3</sup> He finds the twin themes of the incarnation and the redeeming death of Christ important in Galatians (2.20; 3.1, 13; 6.14, 17). God's act of love is concentrated, according to Bornkamm, in Christ's death on the cross (Rom. 8.32). He concludes:

If Gal. 1.15f. is set in the context of these thoughts . . . the important consequence emerges that here, too, the christological title 'Son of God' denotes not, as usually interpreted, the Risen and Exalted One, but the Son of God 'sent' as man, who was made subject to the law and died on the cross to redeem all men.<sup>4</sup>

The resurrection "validated and manifested him as such" putting his death in force.

The major problem with Bornkamm's interpretation lies with his selection of the evidence and its application. He ignores several important Sonship passages in Paul such as Rom. 1.3-4; 8.29; 1 Cor. 15.28; Col. 1.13; and 1 Thess. 1.9-10. These passages belie the limited understanding of Sonship proposed by Bornkamm. As we shall see shortly in connection with Rom. 1.3-4, Paul explicitly maintains that the Gospel preached by him concerned God's Son who now reigns in power (cf. esp. 1 Cor. 15.28 and Col. 1.13). Thus when the apostle says in Gal. 1.16 that God revealed his Son to him so that he might preach him (viz., the Son) to the Gentiles, it does not seem very probable that he intended to limit this to the Son of God being sent into the world and to his redeeming death. Paul's Sonship Christology is far broader than this. In the end Christ's divine Sonship is absolutely essential for Paul's understanding of of the relation between God and Christ.

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<sup>1</sup>Bornkamm, "Revelation of Christ," p. 97. The relevance of most of the passages cited by Bornkamm to the theme of pre-existence is far from clear.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 97-98.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 98

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 98.



F. Mussner takes the view that the title "Son of God" is intended in a comprehensive sense in Galatians:

der Sohn ist nicht bloss der in die Fülle der Zeit in die Welt Gesandte, er ist nicht bloss der von einem Weib Geborene und unter das Gesetz Gestellte, er ist nicht bloss der sich für uns Dahingegebene, und er ist nicht bloss der Auferweckte und jetzt bei Gott Lebende. Das Prädikat 'Sohn' fasst vielmehr alle diese Aspekte zusammen. 'Sohn' ist das die himmlische und irdische Existenz Jesu Christus umfassende Prädikat . . . Diesen Sohn hat Gott 'in' Paulus geoffenbart.<sup>1</sup>

This inclusive understanding of Mussner is certainly preferable to the view of Bornkamm, though if Gal. 1.15-16 refers to the actual revelation granted on the road to Damascus, then perhaps Mussner has asserted both too much and too little regarding what Paul himself meant in Gal. 1.15-16. He may be maintaining too much to the extent that Paul did not receive his Son of God conception in totality at the time of his conversion-call experience. On the other hand, he may be asserting too little to the extent that Paul may have something more specific and foundational in mind than Mussner reckons on.

b. 2 Cor. 4.4-6 and "His Son" in Gal. 1.16

Hitherto no mention has been made of one important passage, 2 Cor. 4.4-6, which a number of scholars believe relates to Paul's Damascus experience and which some think sheds light on Gal. 1.16.<sup>2</sup> In 2 Cor. 4.4-6 Paul speaks of the "light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." He goes on to say:

For we do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants ~~on account of~~ Christ. For it is God who said, "Light shall shine forth from darkness," who shined forth in our hearts with respect to an illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

Several factors suggest that Paul may in fact have his conversion

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<sup>1</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 86, n. 43.

<sup>2</sup>Those seeing some contact between Gal. 1.16 and 2 Cor. 4.4-6 in terms of Paul's Damascus experience include: M.E. Thrall, "Christ Crucified or Second Adam? A Christological Debate between Paul and the Corinthians," Christ and Spirit in the New Testament (1973), p. 148; Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, p. 106; M. Dibelius and W.G. Kümmel, Paul (1953), p. 60; G.S. Duncan, The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians (1934), p. 28. Dupont, "The Conversion of Paul," p. 192; Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 292-293, and E. Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians (1977), p. 408.

<sup>3</sup>Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 134 understands τῆς γνῶσεως

experience in mind. The causal ὅτι of vs. 6 connects what is said there with the claim that Paul preached Christ as Lord, and himself as the servant of his readers. In other words Paul's preaching was the result of God shining in his heart with the illumination which consisted in "the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." From Gal. 1.15-16 it is clear that Paul connected God's revealing of his Son to his own preaching task on the basis of his conversion-call experience. Though the language is very different, the same basic thought is present in the two passages. That Paul has a particular experience in mind in vs. 6 is confirmed by the aorist ἔλαμψεν. With respect to the apostle's life, his conversion-call is unquestionably the time when the enlightenment of his own heart took place.<sup>1</sup> Some might argue that because plurals are employed throughout vss. 5-6 these verses cannot be applied exclusively to Paul. This objection is obviated by the fact that in 2 Corinthians, more than any other letter, Paul seems to oscillate between the singular and the epistolary plural.<sup>2</sup> In many passages in which Paul is primarily the subject (or object) he uses the plural.<sup>3</sup> This may simply be an editorial we, or perhaps Paul wishes to associate his fellow workers with his own apostolic ministry and authority, avoiding a possible charge of megalomania, as well as the possibility of undermining the authority of his own fellow workers.

One further factor points to these verses recalling Paul's conversion. At the end of vs. 6 the apostle mentions "τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ [Ἰησοῦ] χριστοῦ." How did Paul know the glory of God

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as an appositional genitive which gives the sense, the "illumination that consists in the knowledge . . ." The term "knowledge" itself relates to the knowledge which is imparted in the Gospel. Cf. Professor Barrett, *ibid.*, p. 135 and R. Bultmann, Der zweite Brief an die Korinther (1976), p. 110.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, p. 111. If 2 Cor. 4.6 derives from Paul's conversion experience then the phrase ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν perhaps confirms our view concerning ἐν ἐμοί in Gal. 1.16.

<sup>2</sup>On the problem of the epistolary plural in Paul see Blass-Debrunner-Funk, sect. 280 and M. Zerwick, Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples (1963), sect. 8 who says, "it is rash to regard Paul's 'we' as always referring to the apostle along with his associates. The oscillation between the singular and the plural is most pronounced in 2 Cor. 10. 1-11.6, but it can hardly be doubted that the first person plurals refer primarily, if not exclusively, to Paul."

<sup>3</sup>E.g. in 2 Cor. 1.8ff. the plural is used but it seems very clear that Paul is speaking of a personal experience. For the personal



shown in the face of Jesus Christ? It may be a mere figure of speech, but since we know that Paul actually saw the risen Christ (1 Cor. 9.1; 15.8), it seems much more likely that Paul really had seen the glory of God in the face of Christ at his conversion. Thus, in spite of the plurals, vss. 5 and 6 seem to reflect the conversion experience of Paul himself. Vs. 4b may also. The parallelism in both wording and thought between vs. 4b and vs. 6b seems to indicate that the former is closely related to the latter.<sup>1</sup>

The significance of the link between Gal. 1.16 and 2 Cor. 4.4-6 for explaining what Paul meant by the expression "God's Son" in the former passage was seen as far back as 1921 by E. de Witt Burton. As a result of the connection between the two passages Burton concluded:

it is reasonable, therefore, to take 2 Cor. 4.4-6, in which Jesus is described as the image of God, and it is said that God shined in the apostle's heart to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, as indicating the principal emphasis of the expression, 'his Son', in Gal. 1.16, and so to understand the term as referring especially to the resemblance of the Son to the Father.<sup>2</sup>

Burton conceived of the "resemblance of the Son to the Father" in moral terms, but this is inadequate.<sup>3</sup> Paul means quite literally that in seeing the resurrected Jesus he saw the glory of God in his face;<sup>4</sup> he saw the one who already is the image of God in an absolute sense.

To unfold in detail the complex origin and history of the ideas of the δόξα of God and the εἰκών of God would require far more space than is available in this study.<sup>5</sup> The salient features of the

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character of many of the first person plural references in 2 Corinthians see the commentaries of Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, Bultmann, Zweite Korinther, and H. Lietzmann, An die Korinther I/II (1969<sup>5</sup>).

<sup>1</sup>The first part of 2 Cor. 4.4 has an obvious connection with Paul's personal biography. Until Paul himself saw the risen Christ his own "mind" remained blinded in unbelief, incapable of perceiving the illumination of the Gospel. The parallelism between the two verses consists in the following phrases: φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ χριστοῦ ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ (vs. 4b) and φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ χριστοῦ.

<sup>2</sup>Burton, Galatians, p. 408.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 410.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Dupont, "Conversion of Paul," p. 192 and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 291-293.

<sup>5</sup>For important treatments of the eikon theme with extensive bibliography see J. Jervell, Imago Dei: Gen 1, 26f. im Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen (1960); F.-W. Eltester, Eikon im Neuen Testament (1958), and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 245ff.

history of these two ideas leading to Paul's statement in 2 Cor. 4.4-6, however, may be broadly outlined.

In the Old Testament glory ( $\text{קְדוּשָׁה}$ ) is one of the primary attributes of God whereby he is known or makes himself known to men. The glory of the Lord ( $\text{קְדוּשָׁה} \text{ יְיָ}$ ) is connected with God's saving acts in history wherein his glory is manifested (cf. Dt. 5.24; Ps. 97.6; 102.15-16; Is. 40.5; 60.1-2; 63.12). Men in turn give glory to God for who he is and what he has done (cf. Josh. 7.19; 1 Sam. 6.5; Ps. 66.2; 96.3, 7, 8).<sup>1</sup> But the most theologically significant uses of the phrase "the glory of God" occur in Ezekiel and certain parts of the Pentateuch commonly designated as the Priestly Document. Here the phrase  $\text{קְדוּשָׁה} \text{ יְיָ}$  becomes a virtual terminus technicus for describing theophanies.<sup>2</sup> The glory of Yahweh is revealed both to the nation of Israel as a whole and to Moses in particular in Exodus and Numbers (cf. Ex. 16.7, 10; 24.16, 17; 29.43; 33.18, 19, 22; Nu. 14.10, 22; 16.10; 20.6). The common factor in all of the texts just cited is that the glory of the Lord, visible as radiant light (Ex. 24.17), signifies his actual presence. Perhaps the most interesting of these texts is Ex. 33.17ff. where God grants Moses' request for a theophany. Moses is not permitted to see the face of Yahweh, but, after his glory passes by, that is his physical manifestation, Moses, who hitherto was shielded by God's hand, is permitted to see the back of the Lord.

Ezekiel in his various visions also saw the glory of Yahweh. The "glory of God" again signifies God's visible presence (cf. Ezek. 1.28; 3.12, 23; 8.4; 9.3; 10.4, 19; 11.22f.; 43.2; 44.4f.). Describing the first of his visions, Ezekiel goes so far as to say that the likeness of God which he saw was "the form (or likeness) like the appearance of a man" ( $\text{כְּצֶלֶם אִישׁ}$ ) (1.26). This form of a man is described as possessing the appearance of fire and of the brightness of a rainbow (1.27), and it is then said to have "the form (or likeness) of the glory of the Lord" ( $\text{כְּצֶלֶם הַקְּדוּשָׁה}$ ) (1.28).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For a good survey of the Old Testament usage of glory see G. von Rad, "δοκείω," TDNT 2, pp. 238-242.

<sup>2</sup>G. von Rad, Old Testament Theology 1 (1975), pp. 239-241. See also idem, "δοκείω," pp. 239-241.

<sup>3</sup>Von Rad, Theology 1, pp. 145-146 makes the interesting comment: "Israel conceived even Jahweh himself as having human form. But the way of putting it which we use runs in precisely the wrong direction



One other Old Testament usage of glory which may have a bearing on 2 Cor. 4.4-6 requires mentioning. In the night vision of Daniel, Daniel sees "one like a son of man" (  $\text{וְיָסֵד} \text{ } \text{וְיָסֵד}$  ) who came to the Ancient of Days. To this one "like a son of man" God gives dominion,  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$ , and kingdom. Although  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$  might well simply mean honor in this context, it more probably implies the transference of divine glory to this figure since the dominion and kingdom given to him were the dominion and kingdom of God himself (Cf. LXX Dan. 7.14  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ ; also cf. Mk. 13.26).

The translators of the Septuagint took over the Greek word  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$  to translate the Hebrew term  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$ , and a variety of other words as well, in the process giving  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$  an entirely new range of meaning.<sup>1</sup> This range of meaning corresponds essentially to that which

$\text{וְיָסֵד}$  already possessed. G. Kittel correctly maintains that  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$  when used of God, refers to "the 'divine glory' which reveals the nature of God in creation and in His acts."<sup>2</sup> As with  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$ ,  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$  became a technical term for the self-disclosure of God in theophanies. Thus, for example, in the well-known theophany to Isaiah the Hebrew term  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$  (6.1) is there alone translated as  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ , so that it is God's glory which fills the temple and not his "train." Perhaps even more striking is Ps. 17.15 (LXX 16.15). The Psalmist says:

As for me, I will behold thy face (God's) in righteousness; When I awake, I shall be satisfied with beholding thy form (  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$  ).

according to the Old Testament ideas, for, according to the ideas of Jahwism, it cannot be said that Israel regarded God anthropomorphically, but the reverse, that she considered man as theomorphic. As well as many passages in the prophets or in the poets . . . the very carefully formulated statement in Ezek. 1.26 is of particular importance. The light-phenomenon of the 'glory of God' clearly displays human contours. It has rightly been said that Ezek. 1.26 is the theological prelude to the locus classicus for the imago doctrine in Gen. 1.26." Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, p. 291 claims the technical use of "glory of God" for the theophanies continues through apocalyptic literature to the Merkaba tradition in Rabbinic sources.

<sup>1</sup>G. Kittel, " $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ ," TDNT 2, pp. 233-234 claims of  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ : "Found already in Homer and Herodotus, this word has in all non-biblical Greek a basic meaning which reflects its links with  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ , namely, 'what one thinks,' 'opinion'. This takes two forms: a. from  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ , 'I think,' 'the opinion which I have,' b. from  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$ , 'I count as,' 'the opinion which others have of me.'" For a history of the term in its standard Greek usage see pp. 234-237. Interestingly, Philo invariably uses  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$  in its Greek sense rather than that of the Septuagint where  $\delta\delta\epsilon\alpha$  translates  $\text{וְיָסֵד}$ .

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 244.

The LXX translator rendered the  $\text{לְהַאֲרֹא$  as  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  in keeping with the use of  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  for visible divine manifestations.<sup>1</sup> Kittel's conclusion concerning  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  is essentially correct:

In the LXX and therefore in the Bible generally  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  acquires its distinctive sense as a term for this divine nature or essence [the divine radiance of God] either in its visible or perceptible form.<sup>2</sup>

In light of the above, it should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the Wisdom tradition that Wisdom herself is connected with the divine glory. Thus Wis. 7.25 describes her as 'a pure emanation of the glory of the Lord.'

The New Testament writers clearly maintain the various lines of usage present in both the Hebrew and Greek Old Testaments in their use of "glory."<sup>3</sup> This includes the connection of "glory" with theophanies and other heavenly appearances (cf. Lk. 2.9; 9.28ff.; Acts 7.55f., 22.11; Tit. 2.13; Rev. 15.8, 21.23). There are, however, two important new features. God's glory is transferred to Christ (Mk. 10.37, 13.26; Mt. 25.31; Lk. 24.26; 1 Cor. 2.8; Phil. 3.21; Tit. 2.13; Heb. 1.3; 1 Pet. 4.13; 5.1), and believers are to participate in the divine glory (Rom. 8.17; 1 Cor. 2.7; Phil. 3.21; 1 Thess. 2.12; 2 Thess. 2.14; 2 Tim. 2.10; 1 Pet. 5.4, 10).<sup>4</sup>

The bearing of the above material on the use of  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  in 2 Cor. 4.4-6 will be made clear in a moment. Before doing so, however, a few words must be said concerning  $\epsilon\iota\kappa\acute{\omega}\nu$  which is closely related to  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  in 2 Cor. 4.4-6.

The origins of the  $\epsilon\iota\kappa\acute{\omega}\nu$  idea found in 2 Cor. 4.4, and Col. 1.15

<sup>1</sup>Cf. LXX Nu. 12.8 where the same translation is made of  $\text{לְהַאֲרֹא}$ . The normal LXX translation for this Hebrew word is  $\mu\omicron\rho\phi\eta$  or  $\delta\mu\omicron\iota\omega\mu\alpha$ .

<sup>2</sup>Kittel, " $\delta\omicron\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ ," p. 244. L.H. Brockington, "The Septuagintal Background to the New Testament use of  $\Delta\omicron\zeta\alpha$ ," Studies in the Gospels. Essays in Memory of R.H. Lightfoot (1955), pp. 3ff., isolates four ways in which  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  is employed in the New Testament which derive directly from Old Testament usage: "(1) The conception of brightness. (2) The power and wonder working activity of God. (3) The saving power of God. (4) The conception of God-likeness."

<sup>3</sup>Kittel, " $\delta\omicron\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ ," p. 247 declares: "It is obvious that the NT use of  $\delta\delta\zeta\alpha$  follows the LXX rather than Greek usage. With the senses of 'reputation' and 'power' already mentioned, the word is also used strictly in the NT to express the divine mode of being. This is true of all the NT authors."

<sup>4</sup>On this point see especially ibid., pp. 249-251.



for that matter, are not to be sought in Adam created κατ' εἰκόνα as depicted in Gen. 1.26-27 (cf. 5.1, 9.6).<sup>1</sup> The eikon idea was taken over in Judaism for describing the hypostasized figure of Wisdom (cf. Wis. 7.26 and Philo, Leg. alleg. I.43). Philo also used it extensively for his hypostasized Logos figure (cf. Conf. ling. 62, 164; De Somn. I.238-240; and Leg. alleg. III.96).<sup>2</sup> The passage from Leg. alleg. III.96 is of particular interest because in it Philo describes God as the παράδειγμα τῆς εἰκόνας, the image being the Logos, and the Logos is then called the παράδειγμα of other beings. Philo proceeds to explain Gen. 1.27 as meaning "τῆς μὲν εἰκόνας κατὰ τὸν θεὸν ἀπεικονισθείσης, τοῦ δὲ ἀνθρώπου κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα λαβοῦσαν δύναμιν παραδείγματος." This line of reasoning would account for the manner in which Paul predicates εἰκὼν to Christ in a unique sense over against man's possession of the εἰκὼν because of descent from Adam (cf. De Op. Mundi 24-25).<sup>3</sup> In De Somn. I.227-241, operating within the tradition which conceived of Wisdom as a "Theophanieträger" (cf. Wis. 10),<sup>4</sup> Philo portrays the Logos as the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ who manifested himself to the patriarch Jacob at Bethel thereby explaining Gen. 31.13: ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ θεὸς ὁ ὀφθεῖς σοι ἐν τόπῳ θεοῦ. The Logos, as the image of God, manifests the divine nature to those incapable of encountering God directly, and to them appears as God himself (De Somn. I.238-240).<sup>5</sup> The term "eikon" was

<sup>1</sup>Contra G. Kittel, "εἰκὼν," TDNT 2, pp. 395-396; Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 71-72, and others. [For others agreeing with Kittel see Jervell, Imago Dei (1960), pp. 217, n. 170.]

<sup>2</sup>For extensive discussions on the background of εἰκὼν in Hellenistic and Jewish thought see F.W. Eltester, Eikon and Jervell, Imago Dei. Jervell (pp. 56-58) connects the εἰκὼν idea in Philo with the Urmensch hypothesis of Gnosticism. With H. Hegermann, Die Vorstellung vom Schöpfungsmittler im Hellenistischen Judentum und Urchristentum (1961), p. 98, we doubt that this is either necessary or correct.

<sup>3</sup>Jervell, Imago Dei, p. 217 is correct when he claims, "Christus ist die Eikon nicht der κατ' εἰκόνα ἄνθρωπος [Gen. 1.27]." See infra, pp. 211, 214-215.

<sup>4</sup>For a discussion of this tradition see Hegermann, Vorstellung vom Schöpfungsmittler, pp. 67-87.

<sup>5</sup>Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 260ff., attempts to establish a close connection between the term εἰκὼν (and semantically related terms like μορφή and ὁμοίωμα) and theophanies. He thinks that De Somn. I.227-241 provides conclusive evidence for the use of "εἰκὼν" in theophanic contexts (pp. 279ff.) but he has failed to take account of the fact that the Logos is described as the εἰκὼν of God in many non-epiphanic contexts in Philo. He does not cite any other examples

applied to the Wisdom and Logos figures in Judaism because the eikon was thought to participate in the being which it represented and to reveal its true inner essence (cf. Wis. 7.6). Yet, as with Philo's Logos, it was thought to possess an existence of its own.<sup>1</sup> In Wis. 7.26 the figure of Wisdom becomes an agent of revelation by manifesting to men the essence and inner being of God. In Philo both Wisdom and the Logos have similar functions. (See the passages from Philo mentioned above). It is this conception of the eikon as the agent of divine revelation which provides at least part of the background for understanding Christ as the image of God in 2 Cor. 4.4 and Col. 1.15.<sup>2</sup>

It is well-known that in Jewish thought and in the writings of Paul εἰκών and δόξα are closely related, if not synonymous with one another (cf. Nu. 12.8 and Ps. 16.15 MT and LXX; Wis. 7.25-26; De Somn. I.232 [δόξα may have a double-entendre here]; Rom. 8.29-30; 1 Cor. 11.7; 2 Cor. 3.18).<sup>3</sup> Thus in 2 Cor. 4.4-6 the reference to Christ as "the image of God" (vs. 4b) and the reference to "the glory of God in the face of Christ" may be virtually synonymous. As F.F. Bruce remarks, "When he [Paul] speaks of seeing 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ' he uses language which practically amounts to seeing in Christ the image of God."<sup>4</sup>

When Paul saw Christ on the road to Damascus, he saw him as a figure who reflected glory from his face (2 Cor. 4.6; cf. Phil. 3.21),

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in Philo or the Wisdom tradition where the term εἰκών is employed in descriptions of epiphanies. The Logos' possession of the divine εἰκών admirably suits Philo's discussion in De Somn. I.227-241, but there is no indication that it is an attribute of Logos which belongs essentially to epiphanies (cf. the passages mentioned above.). On the other hand, Vita Mos. I.65 does provide evidence for the connection Kim wishes to make, though even here Philo may have the Logos in mind.

<sup>1</sup>H. Kleinknecht, "εἰκών," TDNT 2, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Klümmel, Theology, p. 163; Bruce, Paul, pp. 122-124; Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 133; Eltester, Eikon, pp. 133-135; and E. Lohse, Colossians and Philemon: A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon (1971), pp. 46-48.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Brockington, "Septuagintal Background," pp. 7-8; Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 100ff.; and R.P. Martin, Carmen Christi: Philippians ii.5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship (1967), pp. 109ff., though he is incorrect when he says the LXX translates ἡ ἰμαῖα by both εἰκών and δόξα. What he should have said is that ἡ ἰμαῖα, which means image or shape, is translated by δόξα [Nu. 12.8; Ps. 16 (17).15].

<sup>4</sup>Bruce, Paul, p. 123.



glory which belongs properly only to God himself and to his presence. It was probably this which led Paul to the realization that he was seeing (or had seen) a visible manifestation of God—the eikon of the invisible God (cf. Col. 1.15), the one revealing the essential nature of God.<sup>1</sup>

The thought of 2 Cor. 4.6 and Gal. 1.15-16 is essentially parallel. In both passages God is the one acting on Paul's inner being: ἔλαμψεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν (2 Cor. 4.6); εὐδόκησεν . . . ἀποκαλύψαι . . . ἐν ἐμοί (Gal. 1.15-16). The concept "πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως" of 2 Cor. 4.6 appears to be very similar in meaning to "ἀποκαλύψαι" of Gal. 1.16. These similarities probably indicate that "the glory of God on the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4.6) is parallel to "his Son" (Gal. 1.16), within the context of Paul's actual call to preach the Gospel. It seems reasonable to conclude that the physical seeing of the "glory of God on the face of Christ" constituted the revelation of his divine Sonship for Paul because through Christ's glory Paul recognized the essential "relatedness" of Christ to God, and this "relatedness" was best described in terms of Christ's divine Sonship. This view is corroborated by the connection between the eikon thought of 2 Cor. 4.4b and the "glory of God on the face of Christ" in vs. 6. To the extent that Paul perceived Christ to be the eikon of God, in conjunction with his conversion, it was natural for him to describe Christ as the Son of God because as the possessor of the unique characteristics of God, as a manifestation of the inner essence of God, Christ would naturally be thought of as the Son of God.<sup>2</sup> This contention is supported by the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Eltester, Eikon, pp. 132f. who says: "Die Herrlichkeit Christi ist nichts anderes als die Herrlichkeit Gottes, die auf dem Angesichte Christi sichtbar wird; damit ist nur umschrieben, was die Prädikation 'Abbild Gottes' meint: Christus als Eikon Gottes ist der die Erkenntnis Gottes Ermöglichende. Darin ist einmal ausgedrückt, dass Gott durch seine Eikon für den Glauben sichtbar wird, und zum anderen, dass in Christus als der Eikon Gott selbst sichtbar wird. Christus als Abbild Gottes ist also die Offenbarung und Repräsentation Gottes."

<sup>2</sup>See supra, pp. 85-86 for the relation of the eikon to its prototype. There is good reason to believe that εἰκών like the related term "μορφή" was used in discussions of the essential relation of parents to children. See The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament 2 (1976), p. 680, note on 4 Macc. 15.4.

fact that both Philo (Conf. Ling. 62, 164) and Paul (Col. 1.13-15, cf. Rom. 8.29)<sup>1</sup> connect the two ideas of divine Sonship and the state of being the eikon of God.<sup>2</sup> Thus we may say that Paul described the vision at his conversion-call as a "revealing of God's Son" because in that experience God made Paul aware of the unique Father-Son relationship between himself and Christ, the crucified and resurrected Lord.

#### 4. The Son as the Content of the Gospel According to Gal. 1.16b

Because God impressed the divine Sonship of Christ on Paul's heart at the time of his call to apostleship, Paul naturally conceived of the Son of God as the content of his Gospel. Thus Paul can say that he was set apart in order to preach the Gospel of the Son of God to the Gentiles (Gal. 1.16b). This is no passing remark for Paul. It will be seen that in Rom. 1.1-4, 9, Paul specifies to the Romans, a relatively unknown group of fellow Christians, that the Son of God who now reigns as Lord, is the content of his Gospel. Moreover, in another passage which will be examined later, Paul reminds the Corinthians that he, Silas, and Timothy preached the Son of God, Jesus Christ, among them. Although it is true that Paul normally talks about

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<sup>1</sup>Kittel, "εἰκών," p. 395 asserts of the eikon expression: "Even if the expression in Col. 1.15 were not accompanied by the parallel υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ (v.13), it would still be apparent that the being of Jesus as image is only another way of talking about His being as the Son."

<sup>2</sup>The predication of Sonship and the designation "eikon of God" are thought to be closely related by many. Cf. Kümmel, Theology, p. 163; Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 67-78 (he is misguided, however, in trying to separate the eikon idea from the Wisdom and Logos ideas in favor of a straightforward link with Gen. 1.26-27); A. Schlatter, Die Theologie der Apostel (1977<sup>3</sup>), p. 338 who conjectures that "vielleicht besass er im Begriff 'Bild Gottes' eine Denkform, mit der er sich das ewige Verhältnis des Vaters zum Sohn verdeutlicht hat"; idem, Gottes Gerechtigkeit: Eine Kommentar zum Römerbrief (1975<sup>5</sup>), p. 282; and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 292-293, 323-324. Kim maintains: "To see the risen Christ as appearing 'like a son of God' [a technical description used in epiphanic visions, according to Kim] is the same as to see him as having the εἰκόνα of God; and the risen Christ who appeared to Paul as one 'like a son of God' and having the εἰκόνα of God is the Son of God and the εἰκών of God. Paul saw the risen Christ as the Son of God and as the image of God at the same time, namely at the Damascus Christophany. Hence the parallelism between Gal. 1.16 and 2 Cor. 4.4-6."



preaching Christ, or the Gospel of Christ,<sup>1</sup> it is the occasional statement that his Gospel concerns the Son of God, which probably takes us to the heart of what he preached. This seems to be the implication of the repeated soteriological usage of Sonship in the epistles. (We will discuss this theme in a later chapter.) Although we lack evidence about what Paul specifically preached, he probably preached that it was the Son of God himself who came to die in order to save men (cf. Gal. 2.20; 4.4-5; Rom. 5.10; 8.3, 32; Col. 1.13-14). For this reason he describes the content of his preaching as the Son of God, and in Gal. 2.20, as will be seen, he identifies the Son of God as the content of his own faith. Only the Son of God, incarnate as Jesus Christ, could bring salvation from God; for in Paul's mind he was the perfect representative of God even as a man. But it was not enough that the Son of God should die to redeem men; he must at the same time be believed in. Hence according to Gal. 1.16, Paul preached the Son of God, who was revealed in his own life by God himself.<sup>2</sup>

In drawing the discussion of Gal. 1.15-16 to a close one final point needs to be made clear regarding the Son of God idea in Gal. 1.16. If Gal. 1.16a is as closely connected with 2 Cor. 4.4-6 as has been suggested, then the revelation of the Son of God to Paul means that from the very outset Paul preached a message which presupposed the intimate relationship between the salvation bearer and God himself that transcended temporal limitations. It was not merely Messianic

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<sup>1</sup>It is worth noting that it is only very seldom that Paul connects the title "Lord" to the Gospel or the content of his preaching (cf. 2 Thess. 1.8; 2 Cor. 4.5, though in both of these passages contextual considerations appear to have dictated the use of "Lord."). As a title, "Son" is far more closely connected with what Paul actually preached than "Lord." The designation "Lord" does not specifically concern the facts of the Gospel (the coming, the dying, and the resurrection of Christ) in quite the same way that Sonship does.

<sup>2</sup>The author of the Book of Acts seems to be aware of the special connection between the "Son of God" designation and Paul's preaching. The only two instances of the usage of the "Son of God" terminology in Acts occur in conjunction with Paul's preaching. In the Sermon at Antioch of Pisidia Paul quotes Ps. 2.7 with its statement "you are my Son" in order to prove the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13.33ff.). More interesting, however, in light of our discussion of Gal. 1.16, is the assertion in Acts 9.20 that immediately after his conversion Paul preached Jesus in the synagogues, that he was "the Son of God." This seems to correspond exactly with the implication of Gal. 1.15-17.

Sonship (Thrall) since 2 Cor. 4.4-6 points to something far more fundamental with respect to the revelation of the Son of God in Gal. 1.16. Nor was it simply the revealing of the "Son of God 'sent' as man" (Bornkamm). Once again 2 Cor. 4.4-6 contradicts this limited view. On the other hand, the revealing of the Son of God may not have included all that constituted Paul's mature understanding (Mussner). What seems much more probable is that Paul developed his conception of the pre-existent Son of God, sent into the world to redeem men, now exalted to glory and Lordship, from his encounter on the Damascus road with one whose very appearance revealed his relationship to God as Son.<sup>1</sup>

B. The Pauline Use of a Pre-Pauline  
Son of God Formula: Rom. 1.3-4

The most frequently discussed Sonship text in the whole of the Pauline corpus is undoubtedly Rom. 1.3-4, but the very fact that so many writers discuss Rom. 1.3-4 as such, without taking serious account of Rom. 1.1-2, indicates a lack of interest in the real point which Paul is making to his Roman readers. Rom. 1.3-4 almost certainly does embody a very early confessional or creedal formula,<sup>2</sup> but it is one which Paul has taken up and re-worked for his own purposes. It has been suggested that the primitive confession

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schnackenburg, "Christologie," p. 329 on the formative significance of the "revelation of God's Son" for Paul.

<sup>2</sup> The only serious dissent from this viewpoint known to us is expressed by V.S. Poythress, "Is Romans 1.3-4 a Pauline Confession After All?" ET 87 (1975-76), pp. 180-183 who makes out the best possible case for a Pauline origin. He argues for the possibility that "Ro. 1.3-4 is a Pauline free composition with some traditional expressions" (p. 180), though he admits that it may in fact be a pre-Pauline confessional formula. He cannot decide! J.D.G. Dunn, "Jesus—Flesh and Spirit, an Exposition of Romans I.3-4," JTS 24 (1973), p. 40 enumerates the following reasons for accepting its pre-Pauline character: "parallelism of the phrases, with the combination of participial and relative clauses characteristic of such formulae, the Semitically styled and untypically Pauline emphasis on Jesus' descent from David, the primitive 'adoptionist'—like ring of  $\delta\rho\iota\sigma\theta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , the singular occurrence in Paul of the phrase  $\text{υ}\iota\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \delta\upsilon\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\iota$ , the almost unique Semitic form  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omega\sigma\acute{\omicron}\nu\eta\varsigma$ , and the absence of any mention of the cross elsewhere so central to Paul's theology." Cf. P.E. Langevin, "Une Confession Prepaulinienne de la 'Seigneurie' du Christ: Exégèse de Romains 1, 3-4," Le Christ Hier, Aujourd'hui et Demain (1976), pp. 284-291. Some of the reasons which have been advanced are naturally stronger than others. For example the absence of mention of the cross is not a very compelling reason to deny it to



contained in Rom. 1.3-4 is representative of the state of Christological reflection at the time of Paul's conversion.<sup>1</sup> If this is correct, Rom. 1.3-4 may provide a possible touchstone of early Christology against which Paul's own developed Son of God ideas may be measured. Unfortunately, no consensus exists regarding the exact composition of the pre-Pauline formula. Thus, with J.D.G. Dunn, it is methodologically more reasonable to begin by attempting to determine the Pauline understanding of the passage as it stands before entering into the hypothetical problem of reconstructing his Vorlage.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, impossible to discuss the present use of the Christological formula in Rom. 1.3-4 without occasional reference to pre-Pauline traits, but these must not be allowed to dominate the discussion in determining Paul's meaning, as so often is the case.

#### 1. The Context of Rom. 1.3-4

A proper understanding of Rom. 1.3-4 requires that careful attention be given to the context in which it occurs and Paul's intention. The prescript of the epistle to the Romans is the longest among all of the extant Pauline letters.<sup>3</sup> The reason for the

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Paul, but the overall case for its pre-Pauline origin is stronger than for almost any other passage in Paul. Unfortunately today, too many scholars are finding pre-Pauline passages embedded everywhere in Paul. Hengel's essay "Chronologie und Christologie" offers a much needed corrective for this problem.

<sup>1</sup>Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Dunn, "Flesh and Spirit," p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>The salutation of Romans consists of 93 words; the next longest, Galatians, has 75 words. 1 Corinthians' greeting has 56 words, 2 Corinthians' 41, Philippians' 32, Colossians' 28, 1 Thessalonians' 19, 2 Thessalonians' 27, and Philemon's 41. The salutation most comparable in scope and content is that of Galatians, where Paul is forced to defend himself against attacks on his authority and the Gospel preached by him. Professor Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans 1 (1975), pp. 47-48 comments regarding the unusual character of Paul's greetings: "Thus we see particularly clearly in Romans Paul's radical transformation of the Greek epistolary prescript. In his hands it has ceased to be a mere protocol, standing outside the 'context' or body of the letter, and has become an integral part of it." This consideration, especially in the case of Romans and Galatians, makes the term "salutation" inadequate for designating the introductory portions of Paul's letters.

inordinate length of the prescript of Romans is not difficult to discover. The Christian community at Rome was the only one to which Paul wrote, so far as we know, that he or his associates had not founded.<sup>1</sup> For this reason Rom. 1.1-7 was intended by Paul to serve as an introduction to his apostolic authority and his mission with regard to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was directed to a community of believers whom he hoped to visit but who had no formal ties with his missionary activity and therefore were under no prior obligation to him through dependence upon his Gospel for their salvation. As a result of his lack of a direct connection with the Christians of Rome, he identified his own position (vs. 1), the nature and content of the Gospel to which he was set apart (vss.2-4), and the particular mission to which he was assigned by Christ (vs. 5). He describes his position as that of a slave to Jesus Christ, who has been called to be an apostle, having been appointed to preach the Gospel of God (vs. 1). According to vs. 2, the Gospel of God is what was promised beforehand through the prophets in the holy writings. Thereby, Paul asserts that the Gospel stands in continuity with the Old Testament. In the two verses which follow, vss. 3-4, Paul gives a precise statement regarding what he perceives to be the content of the Gospel of God: The Gospel of God concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, who was from the seed of David according to the flesh and was appointed Son of God in power according to the Spirit of Holiness since (or by) his resurrection from the dead. Paul apparently sought to demonstrate by the confessional formula which he quotes in vss. 3 and 4 regarding God's Son, the continuity of his message with the "Gospel preached from the beginning."<sup>2</sup> He claims to have received his missionary task from Jesus Christ his Lord, having been charged with bringing the Gentiles to the state of obedience which consists of faith in Christ, and this for the sake of Christ's name, that his name may be praised (vs. 5).

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<sup>1</sup>Paul had apparently not founded the church at Colossae personally but it was probably done under his direction. See Kümmel, Introduction, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. E. Schweizer, "Röm. 1, 3f, und der Gegensatz von Fleisch und Geist vor und bei Paulus," Neotestamentica: German and English Essays 1951-1963 (1963), p. 180; E. Käsemann, An die Römer (1973), p. 11; and Leenhardt, Romans p. 38.



The statement made by Paul in Rom. 1.1, 3-4 that the Gospel of God concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, raises once again the important question of why he chose to describe the Gospel in this way and in what sense it was true of his Gospel. W. Kramer claims that Paul inserted the title "Son of God" into Rom. 1.3a either "in anticipation of the formula about the 'adoption' of the Son in v. 4 . . . to make the formula more complete" or more probably because "the expression in vs. 1, 'the Gospel of God,' brought the title Son of God in its train."<sup>1</sup> A few pages later he then attributes the inclusion of the formula of vss. 3b-4a regarding the Son, which he thinks is adoptionist, to either the phrase "concerning his Son" in vs. 3a or to the expression "the Gospel of God" in vs. 1.<sup>2</sup> What he wishes to assert in any case is that "external factors" were responsible for the two appearances of the title "Son of God" in Rom. 1.3-4. The very purpose of the extended prescript of Romans argues against Kramer's view, however, since, as was pointed out above, Paul was intent upon introducing himself, his authority, his message, and his mission to the Christian community of Rome in preparation for visiting them. In such an important situation it is highly unlikely that Paul would have been as casual about his formulations as Kramer implies. It is significant that on three other occasions Paul identifies his Gospel, or the content of his preaching, with the term "Son of God" (Rom. 1.9; 2 Cor. 1.19; Gal. 1.16). This fact argues that Paul conceived of his Gospel as in some sense specifically about God's Son, and therefore the formulation of Rom. 1.3-4 is not merely the product of external considerations.

## 2. The Gospel Concerning "God's Son"

The inordinate emphasis on the pre-Pauline formula contained in Rom. 1.3-4 has led to a certain distortion in what Paul actually says. It is commonly assumed that Paul inserted the phrase  $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \upsilon\iota\omicron\upsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  at the beginning of vs. 3 in order to clarify and presumably

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<sup>1</sup>Kramer, Christ, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 188. Why the expression the "Gospel of God" should have brought a formulation about the Son of God in its train is not made clear. On the other five occasions where Paul employs the expression "the Gospel of God" no mention is made of the Sonship of Christ. Cf. Rom. 15.16; 2 Cor. 11.7; 1 Thess. 2.2, 8, 9.

"Paulinize" the original formula to conform with his view that Jesus was the pre-existent Son of God, and not merely the Son of God after his resurrection from the dead.<sup>1</sup> From the grammatical point of view, however, the pre-Pauline formula τοῦ γενομένου . . . τοῦ ὀρισθέντος . . . is dependent upon the περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ phrase which expresses the content of the Gospel of God from vs. 1. The words "Jesus Christ our Lord" at the end of vs. 4 are in apposition to the phrase "concerning his Son" in vs. 3. The construction of vss. 1, 3-4, then, indicates that Paul uses the confessional statement embedded in vss. 3b-4a to amplify the content of the Gospel of God. The fact that the term "Son of God" occurs twice underscores the importance of this idea for Paul and shows that for Paul, the statement regarding Davidic descent in vs. 3b is subordinate to the one concerning Sonship in vs. 4a. The prepositional phrase περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ does not guarantee the pre-existence of the Son of God in correction of the possible adoptionist and/or Messianic enthronement tendencies of the original pre-Pauline formula, though it is certainly true that Paul believed in the pre-existence of the Son of God.<sup>2</sup> Instead, the phrase "concern-

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schweizer, "Rom. 1, 3f.," p. 180; *idem*, "Davidic 'Son of God,'" p. 186; K. Wengst, Christologische Formeln und Lieder des Urchristentums (1972), p. 112; Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 246; and P. Stuhlmacher, "Theologische Probleme des Römerbriefpräskripts," Ev. Th. 27 (1967), pp. 382-383. Stuhlmacher, on the basis of the περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ and Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν, argues that "wird die adoptianisch-zweistufige Christologie der Paradosis zu einer dreistufigen Christologie erweitert: Das Evangelium handelt von dem präexistenten Gottesohne, der zur Zeit seiner irdischen Wirksamkeit als Verheissungsträger bzw. Davidide erschien und wirkte, der mit der Auferweckung zum Gottessohn eingesetzt ist und nun nach paulinischer Meinung als himmlischer Herr die Welt für den kommenden Gott freikämpft." Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 49 believes that the original formula began with a statement concerning the Son of God which Paul has apparently preserved in vs. 3a. To our knowledge Bultmann stands alone in this view.

<sup>2</sup>Dunn, "Flesh and Spirit," p. 59 claims that the "idea of pre-existence does not enter into the thought of Rom. 1.3f." Cf. Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, p. 77 and Kramer, Christ, p. 185. Dunn proceeds to maintain that "the pre-existence of Jesus is an inaccurate description of the Pauline theology." He explains this by saying, "In Paul the only really explicit references to pre-existence come where Paul identifies Jesus with pre-existent Wisdom (1 Cor. viii.6, Col. i.15ff; cf. 1 Cor. i.24, 30). Strictly speaking it is Wisdom alone which is pre-existent. The earthly Jesus was not pre-existent: Jesus was the man that Wisdom became (so also, probably, Phil. ii.6f; cf. John i.14)." Dunn's choice of the term Wisdom to



ing his Son" is the primary statement of the content of the Gospel and the formula incorporated into vss. 3b-4a clarifies and amplifies what it means for the Gospel to be about God's Son. Thus we must examine the two participial phrases: τοῦ γενομένου κτλ. and τοῦ ὀρισθέντος κτλ.

a. "Born from the Seed of David"

The words "born from the seed of David" have an unmistakable Messianic ring to them. In the previous chapter it was seen that even during the earthly existence of Jesus, Messianic characteristics were obvious in his words and deeds to the extent that they made possible his crucifixion as a Messianic pretender. The "Messianic quality" of the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth and his death as a Messianic pretender led the earliest Palestinian community to confess the crucified and risen one as Messiah.<sup>1</sup> With the predication of Messiahship to Jesus, his connection with David was assured because both the Old Testament (cf. 2 Sam. 7.12-16; Ps. 18.50; Ps. 89; Ps. 132; Isa. 11.1-3, 10; Jer. 23.5-6; 33.15-26; Ez. 34.23-24; 37.24-25) and contemporary Judaism (cf. Ps. Sol. 17.21, 18; 4Q flor. 1.10-13, 18; 4QPB) connected Messianic Kingship and Davidic descent.<sup>2</sup> The Davidic sonship of Jesus is attested on a number of occasions in the New Testament quite apart from material

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describe the pre-existent one is unfortunate. Wisdom, in spite of the tendency to personify it or even hypostasize it does not imply the range of personality which Paul attributed to the pre-existent one. What would be more accurate to say is that the one who was the pre-existent Son of God (Gal. 4.4; Rom. 8.3), who existed in the form of God (Phil. 2.6-7), became the man Jesus (cf. Rom. 5.10; 8.3, 32; Gal. 2.20; 4.4-5), and now is the exalted Lord (cf. 1 Thess. 1.9-10; 1 Cor. 15.28). At each stage of Christ's existence (pre-existence, earthly existence, and resurrected-exalted existence) Paul identifies his person with the Son of God, and it is this person who subsumes the character of Wisdom in his own personality. Cf. Kümmel, Theology, p. 155 who says, "Paul can speak without any distinction of the pre-existent, the earthly, and the resurrected Christ; he obviously takes seriously the unity of God's action in all three stages of the history of Christ." See also pp. 160-162.

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Longenecker, Christology, p. 80 maintains, "Most important in the establishment of Jesus as Messiah in the consciousness of the earliest Christians . . . was the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead."

<sup>2</sup>

See D.C. Duling, "The Promises to David and their Entrance into Christianity—Nailing Down a likely Hypothesis," NTS 20 (1973-74), pp. 55-69 on the Old Testament and Jewish background to the idea of the promised descendant of David.

originating or centering in the earthly ministry of Jesus (cf. Matt. 1.1ff.; Lk. 1.27, 32; 2 Tim. 2.8; Rev. 5.5, 22.6), but if Rom. 1.3b-4a is a genuine piece of pre-Pauline tradition, then it represents one of the earliest extant post-resurrection instances of the claim. Regardless of this, the phrase "born from the seed of David" constituted for Paul an assertion of the Messiahship of Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

The two words which follow the assertion of Davidic descent, κατὰ σάρκα along with the parallel expression κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης in the second half of the formula, are among the most crucial for understanding the meaning of vss. 3b-4a for Paul. If one brings normal Pauline linguistic usage to bear on the matter, the contrast κατὰ σάρκα/κατὰ πνεῦμα would tend towards giving σάρξ a negative connotation.<sup>2</sup> Schweizer has argued, however, that κατὰ σάρκα/κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης was part of the pre-Pauline formula,<sup>3</sup> and that therefore κατὰ σάρκα is not to be determined by the general Pauline antithesis between flesh and Spirit. On the basis of Is. 31.3; 1 Tim. 3.16; 1 Pet. 3.18 Schweizer concludes κατὰ σάρκα means "in the sphere of 'the flesh'," just as κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης means "in the sphere of the Holy Spirit."<sup>4</sup> In this way, the designation of Jesus' Davidic descent κατὰ σάρκα does not imply a denigration of either Jesus' earthly existence or his Messianic position, but

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<sup>1</sup> Generally speaking Paul shows little interest in his letters in the Messiahship of Jesus. The word χριστός virtually becomes a proper name, though Paul is aware of the Jewish origins and understanding of the term (cf. Rom. 9.5).

<sup>2</sup> Schweizer, "Rom. 1.3f.," p. 181. For a comprehensive treatment of the term "flesh" in Paul see A. Sand, Der Begriff "Fleisch" in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen (1967) and E. Schweizer, "σάρξ. κτλ.," TDNT 7, pp. 125-136.

<sup>3</sup> Opinion on this is divided. In agreement with Schweizer are Schlier, "Zu Röm. 1.3f.," pp. 211-212, 215-216, see now his Der Römerbrief (1977), pp. 25-27 (he thinks it was part of a pre-Pauline Hellenistic version, but not part of the Palestinian original); O. Michel, Der Brief an die Römer (1978<sup>14</sup>), p. 73; Käsemann, Römer, p. 8; Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 247; and Blank, Paulus, p. 251 among others. Opposing Schweizer's view are Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 49; Wengst, Christologische Formeln, p. 113; Sand, Begriff "Fleisch", p. 61; and Linnemann, "Tradition und Interpretation in Röm. 1,3f.," Ev. Th. 31 (1971), pp. 274-275 among others.

<sup>4</sup> Schweizer, "Röm. 1.3f.," pp. 180-189, but esp. pp. 185-187.



simply refers to his physical connection with David.<sup>1</sup>

Dunn has recently challenged the essentially neutral rendering of κατὰ σάρκα by Schweizer. Beginning with an extensive analysis of Paul's use of σάρξ, he demonstrates the multivalent character of Paul's usage. This he claims makes a "simple distinction between physical and moral and between neutral and pejorative uses of σάρξ" unacceptable.<sup>2</sup> He then concludes concerning κατὰ σάρκα in Rom. 1.3b:

"in the sphere of" as a translation of κατὰ (σάρκα) is too vague and colourless an interpretation of Paul's thought . . . Rom. 1.3 in Paul's intention can hardly be understood as a neutral reference to an acceptable Christology. On the contrary, as elsewhere in Paul, κατὰ σάρκα carries with it overtones from its fuller range of meaning and is intended pejoratively. Paul does not affirm the Davidic sonship of Jesus without qualification. He does not deny it either, but he makes it clear that to describe Jesus "as born of the seed of David" is a dangerously defective and misleading half-truth.<sup>3</sup>

Two factors militate against Dunn's position in favor of a more neutral rendering of κατὰ σάρκα. In the first place the linguistic evidence is ambiguous. Dunn himself admits that in Rom. 11.14, 1 Cor. 6.16; 15.39; Eph. 5.29, 31; and Col. 2.1 σάρξ has an essentially neutral connotation, referring to "the physical body, or physical relationship or kinship."<sup>4</sup> On this grounds alone, a neutral use of σάρξ should be possible in Rom. 1.3b as well since the word pertains to Jesus' kinship with David. To the neutral usages conceded by Dunn, one other key verse may be added. Beginning in

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<sup>1</sup>Those listed as accepting a position similar to Schweizer in note 3, p. 96 would generally concur with this. "According to" or "with respect to" are adequate translations of the κατὰ here. Linnemann, "Tradition und Interpretation," p. 275 advances the interesting view that Paul added the two κατὰ phrases and the ἐν δυνάμει of vs. 4 to preserve the eternal Sonship of Jesus against the tendencies of the original tradition.

<sup>2</sup>Dunn, "Flesh and Spirit," pp. 43-51.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 51. Dunn also argues that Davidic descent of Jesus "seems to have been more of an embarrassment and hindrance than a glad and central affirmation" in the Hellenistic church (p.50). He seems to think Davidic descent can be isolated from Messiahship, but the two were bound together, as we have suggested above. The absence of reference to Jesus' Davidic descent does not prove it an embarrassment, contrary to Dunn's assertion. The truth is that for Paul, Davidic descent, like Messiahship, was not a fundamental feature of the Gospel for Gentiles.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

Rom. 9.4 Paul enumerates eight privileges belonging to Israel as a result of her divine election. The final privilege was that the Messiah, who Paul believes was to be for all men (Rom. 15.12), was to be from Israel "κατὰ σάρκα." This instance can hardly be construed to carry a pejorative connotation because it is intended to be the final and greatest privilege granted to the people of Israel—the redeemer of all men was to come, and did come, from the ethnic stock of Israel. The thought of this leads Paul to the moving doxology of vs. 5b.<sup>1</sup>

The second objection to Dunn's position arises from the purpose of Rom. 1.3-4 itself. It is highly improbable that Paul would have gratuitously introduced or even intended the negative evaluation of Jesus' Davidic descent, and by implication, of his Messiahship, suggested by Dunn. The proem of Romans, directed to a community of Christians relatively unknown by Paul but including at least some Jewish Christians,<sup>2</sup> was hardly the place for such a polemic, even if Paul wished to offer one, which does not seem very probable. It is questionable, moreover, whether the readers could possibly have realized Paul's intention of disparaging Jesus' Davidic connection in vs. 3 without knowing Paul's usual understanding of the antithesis between flesh and Spirit.

What κατὰ σάρκα does imply in Rom. 1.3b is that the one who Paul preached as the Son of God was, in terms of his human descent, the fulfiller of the Messianic promises.<sup>3</sup> The second half of the formula, however, makes it clear that this represented only one of two essential perspectives on the Son of God.

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, *ibid.*, p. 47 disputes this interpretation claiming that the negative character of κατὰ σάρκα in Rom. 9.3 and 9.8 reflect on its use in vs. 5. In our opinion the κατὰ σάρκα of Rom. 9.3 is not negative and is not intended to be compared with relationships according to the Spirit as Dunn suggests. Rom. 9.3 is a statement of an actual physical relationship. With regard to Rom. 9.5, Dunn ignores the context in which Paul lists the great privileges of Israel. The concluding doxology indicates just how great a prerogative Paul felt Israel had received.

<sup>2</sup>On the nature and composition of the Roman Christian community see Kümmel, *Introduction*, pp. 309-311 and Professor Cranfield, *Romans* 1, pp. 16-22.

<sup>3</sup>For Paul, part of the promised good news in Rom. 1.2 was that God would give to David a successor who would arise to lead the Gentiles that they should hope in him (cf. Rom. 15.12). On the basis of Rom. 15.12 it is fair to say that Paul could and did interpret the Davidic promise tradition in favor of the Gentiles.



b. "Appointed Son of God in Power"

The second and more important half of the incorporated formula consists of an assertion regarding the present position of Jesus Christ, the one who was the content of Paul's Gospel. It is now widely agreed that the participle ὁρισθέντος must be taken in the sense of "appoint" or "establish" rather than "declare" or "manifest."<sup>1</sup> The significance of ὁρισθέντος, however, can only be determined in conjunction with the rest of the statement.

According to the first five words of vs. 4, Christ was appointed to the position or function of Son of God in power. The prepositional phrase ἐν δυνάμει is of great importance. Sanday and Headlam take the phrase "in power" adverbially in connection with ὁρισθέντος: "declared with might to be Son of God." This assumes that the resurrection, mentioned later in the verse, is the "manifestation of Divine power."<sup>2</sup>

This rendering is grammatically possible, though unnecessary since "in power" may equally well connect with the words "Son of God." Several important considerations favor this latter view. In 1 Cor. 1.24 Paul designates Christ the δύναμις of God for those called to salvation; in 2 Cor. 12.9 he speaks of the δύναμις of Christ dwelling in himself; and in 1 Cor. 5.4 he tells the Corinthians to gather in the presence of the δύναμις of the Lord Jesus Christ. The famous hymn of Phil. 2.5-11 implies that Christ's elevation to Lordship included all of the power associated with God's own dominion over the

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<sup>1</sup> See especially M.-E. Boismard, "Constitué Fils de Dieu (Rom. 1,4)," RB 60 (1953), pp. 5-17. Cf. the recent commentaries on Romans by Leenhardt, Käsemann, Michel, Schlier, Professor Cranfield, and Professor Barrett. On the Old Testament background of ὁρίζειν see L.C. Allen, "The Old Testament Background of (προ) ὁρίζειν in the New Testament," NTS 17 (1970-71), pp. 104-108. He maintains that the ὁρισθέντος of Rom. 1.4 is derived from Ps. 2.7, as are most of the other New Testament occurrences of the verb.

<sup>2</sup> W. Sanday and A.C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (1896), p. 9. Cf. also Boismard, "Constitué Fils de Dieu," pp. 10-11 who avers, "la puissance dont il [Paul] est parlé ne peut-être que la puissance de Dieu qui a ressuscité le Christ, et non la puissance à laquelle le Fils de Dieu avait droit, et qu'il recouvrerait après le dépouillement de l'Incarnation."

world (cf. 1 Cor. 15.28). Perhaps the most decisive consideration favoring the connection of "in power" with "Son of God" is found within Rom. 1.3-4 itself. Paul has attached the formula of vss. 3b-4a to the statement that the Gospel concerns the Son of God. In this context the <sup>2</sup>ἐν δυνάμει of vs. 4a indicates in what sense the one who was already Son of God could be appointed Son of God. Paul's answer is "with power." The time Jesus spent in the flesh was in humility and lowliness (cf. Phil. 2.7-8; 2 Cor. 8.9), but he was, nevertheless, the Son of God during the whole time (cf. Gal. 4.4; Rom. 5.10; 8.3, 32). In the resurrection the Son of God entered into the power granted to him by God. Thus the connection of the δυνάμει with υἱοῦ θεοῦ in Rom. 1.4a defines for Paul the sense in which Jesus could be said to have been appointed to Sonship from the time of his resurrection.<sup>1</sup> In terms of his own theology it is equivalent to Christ's installation as Lord, for it was as Son of God, raised from the dead, that Jesus Christ became the sovereign Lord.

"According to the flesh," the parallel expression to "according to the Spirit of holiness," has already been discussed, but now it is necessary to ask the precise meaning of κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης in the statement concerning Christ's appointment to Sonship with power. The un-Pauline character of the expression πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης is well-known. Paul nowhere else employs ἁγιωσύνη with πνεῦμα to designate (or describe) the Spirit, but on thirteen occasions he speaks of the πνεῦμα ἅγιον. The words "Spirit of holiness" have a Semitic ring to them and may well derive from the Hebrew *רוח קדש* (cf. Ps. 51.13 (MT), Is. 63.10-11; IQS 4.21; 8.6; 9.3; 1QH 7.6-7, 9.32; CD 2.12, and Test. Levi 18.7—the only known instance where πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης occurs in Greek apart from Rom. 1.4). If πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης represents a rather literal translation of an original Hebrew or Aramaic expression, then the words are equivalent to Paul's πνεῦμα ἅγιον.<sup>2</sup> He has probably preserved them unaltered

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schlier, "Zu Röm. 1,3f.," pp. 210-211; Langevin, "Confession Prepaulinienne," pp. 298-305, esp. pp. 303-305, and Professor Barrett, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (1957), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. O. Procksch, "ἅγιος κτλ.," TDNT 1, pp. 114-115; B. Schneider, "Κατὰ Πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης," Biblica 48 (1967), pp. 377-381, urges, "the primitive emphasis on πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης is thus seen to be Pentecostal rather than personal, that is, more orientated to the holiness the risen Christ communicates than simply to the holiness he himself has . . ." The way in which he ties this idea up with Joel 2 and Acts 2 is far from convincing. No more convincing are the arguments of Langevin, "Confession Prepaulinienne," pp. 310-315 that



because they were part of the primitive traditional formula used in Rom. 1.3-4. The κατὰ phrase is difficult to interpret, but the parallel structure of the two participial phrases (vss. 3b and 4a) suggests that the meanings of the κατὰ phrases should be similar as well. Therefore the κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης is probably to be translated, "with respect to or in relationship to the Holy Spirit." The interpretation of the κατὰ phrase leads to the conception that the appointment to Sonship with power occurs on the divine plane, in the sphere where the Holy Spirit's activity originates (cf. the contrast in Rom. 8.9).<sup>1</sup>

The final words of the formula, ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν, present two problems. Some exegetes take the ἐκ temporally, understanding the prepositional phrase to mean "since," or "after," or "from the time of" the resurrection.<sup>2</sup> Others suggest a causal sense: "by virtue of," "on the grounds of," or "because of."<sup>3</sup> Professor Cranfield

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ἁγιοσύνη should have "le sens actif de sanctification" in Rom. 1.4. He fails to take account of the fact that Paul's use of "the Spirit of Holiness" was probably determined by the tradition and that this is why πνεῦμα ἁγίου does not occur. He argues that in the only other New Testament occurrences of ἁγιοσύνη (1 Thess. 3.13; 2 Cor. 7.1), the word is used in an active sense. This is far from certain, but even if it were correct it would not be determinative for Rom. 1.4. The connection which he seeks to make between Rom. 4.25; 6.4; 7.4 and ἁγιοσύνη has nothing to do with proving the active sense for the word; rather it presupposes it.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 18-19. If it were not for the parallelism of the two κατὰ phrases the interpretation of Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 64 would be attractive. (He understands the κατὰ phrase in vs. 4 "to refer to the Holy Spirit, who, as given by the exalted Christ, is the manifestation of His power and majesty, and so the guarantee of His having been appointed Son of God in might.") Dunn, "Flesh and Spirit," pp. 51-60 argues, "it is highly probable that Paul's understanding of Rom. i.3f. reflects his soteriology of flesh and Spirit: that is, that κατὰ σάρκα, κατὰ πνεῦμα in Rom. 1.3f. denote not successive and mutually exclusive spheres of power, but modes of existence and relationships which overlap and coincide in the earthly Jesus" (p. 54). He later says, "It is clear therefore that Paul understands the formula of Rom. i.3f. in terms of a two-stage Christology: but at both stages Jesus is Son of God, and at both stages his sonship is determined by the Spirit and by Jesus' response to the Spirit" (p. 57). Whether Paul ever held the view proposed by Dunn regarding the work of the Spirit in the earthly Jesus is doubtful, but even if he did, Rom. 1.3-4 is not the passage from which to prove it. Reasoning from Paul's soteriology to his Christology is at best rather precarious, and in this instance it leads to a distortion. There is no indication in Rom. 1.3f. that the Spirit played a role in Christ's existence κατὰ σάρκα.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 20; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 62; and Käsemann, Römer, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>E.g. E. Schweizer, Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und

is probably correct when he maintains: "Christ's resurrection was scarcely the ground of His exaltation; but it was the event which was the beginning of his exalted life."<sup>1</sup> The second question is how should the words ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν be interpreted. Do they refer to Christ's own resurrection or to the general resurrection? Are they elliptical for "since his resurrection from the dead," or should they be taken literally?<sup>2</sup> In the end the difference between the two possibilities is not very great because the words obviously refer to the resurrection of Christ: the beginning of the resurrection of the dead occurs in Christ's resurrection, because Christ was the first to be raised from the dead.

### 3. The Pre-Pauline Formula of Rom. 1.3b-4a and Paul's Use of It

Having carried out a rather detailed examination of vss. 3b-4a, it is necessary to bring the various strands together and ask the meaning and significance of Rom. 1.1-4 in Paul's thought and in terms of our thesis. Before doing so, however, a few words are required regarding the pre-Pauline formula.

The exact wording of the formula is impossible to retrieve with complete certitude, but it does seem to us that several things can be said. The important phrase in vs. 4a, ἐν δυνάμει, is in all probability a Pauline addition or at least one which was essential in Paul's thought and which did not occur in the original.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the κατὰ σάρκα/κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγλωσύνης contrast was probably part of the original.<sup>4</sup> A key question is whether the statement concerning the resurrection, which had no counterpart in the

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seinen Nachfolgern (1962<sup>2</sup>), p. 91; Michel, Römer, pp. 63, 74; Langevin, "Confession Prepaulinienne," pp. 305-309; and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 27.

<sup>1</sup>Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. H. Lietzmann, An die Römer (1971<sup>5</sup>), p. 25 and Dunn, "Flesh and Spirit," p. 56.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 20; Schweizer, Erniedrigung und Erhöhung, p. 91, n. 362; Schlier, "Zu Röm. 1,3f," pp. 216-217; and Langevin, "Confession Prepaulinienne," p. 290.

<sup>4</sup>For those favoring and rejecting this opinion, see n. 3, p. 96.



first half of the formula, existed in the original. If it did not, then the original formula may well have referred to Jesus' appointment to Sonship at the time he received the Spirit during his earthly ministry, that is, at his baptism (cf. Mk. 1.10-11), with this constituting the basis of his divine Sonship.<sup>1</sup> If, however, the resurrection statement occurred in the prototype, then the original formula probably constituted what Josef Blank calls a "Messianic enthronization formula." The formula would thus offer a two-stage Christology of the Messiah designated according to his birth and the enthroned Messiah from his resurrection (cf. Acts 2.36).<sup>2</sup> Whatever the pre-Pauline content and meaning of the tradition were, the Pauline content and meaning are more directly accessible to us.

For Paul, the meaning of Rom. 1.3b-4a in its present context is that the Son of God whom he preached was in his human existence and by virtue of his Davidic descent, the long-promised fulfiller of the Messianic promises to Israel. Paul the Jew undoubtedly knew that the Messiah was to have the status of Son of God, but he reverses the priority of Messiahship and Sonship. The Sonship of the risen Lord was not dependent upon his Messianic status because he was the one who had existed in the form of God (Phil. 2.6) and was the Son sent into the world to redeem men (Gal. 4.4-5; Rom. 8.3-4). His descent from David marked him out as the Messiah according to human relationships, in fulfillment of Jewish expectation, but the nature of his person transcended this category because, in Paul's mind at any rate, Jesus Christ was the Son of God before he ever became a descendant of David. This is why the *ἐν δυνάμει* of Rom. 1.4a is so important for Paul. The earthly Jesus was not merely appointed to be Son of God from the time of his resurrection; he had already been Son of God from before his human birth (though Paul does not specify this fact for us here). According to Paul in vs. 4a, Christ was only appointed Son of God with power, with the right of Lordship, after his resurrection from the dead, a point of view affirmed by the hymn in Phil. 2. Thus Rom. 1.3-4 in Pauline terms is not concerned with a two-stage

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<sup>1</sup>For this possible interpretation see Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 19-20.

<sup>2</sup>See Blank, Paulus, pp. 250-258. This is a common understanding and leads to the so-called two-stage Christology. Cf. Hahn, Titles of Jesus, pp. 246-251; Langevin, "Confession Prepaulinienne," pp. 291-319; and Wengst, Christologische Formeln, pp. 114-115.

Christology, but with two differing characterizations of Christ, both true, but on differing planes of existence.<sup>1</sup>

Rom. 1.3-4 indicates that for Paul the Sonship of Jesus Christ was a fundamental feature of his existence. In fact it may not be going too far to say that it was the most fundamental feature of his existence for Paul. Christ's Sonship is antecedent to his position as Messiah (cf. Rom. 8.3; Gal. 4.4; Phil. 2.6) and to his post-resurrection appointment to Lordship (cf. Phil. 2.6-11). Regardless of the function he is fulfilling in God's saving activity, he remains the unique Son of God, whereas Messiahship and Lordship are positions which the Son of God occupies at differing times in his service for God. The full meaning of Paul's assertion that his Gospel concerns the Son of God will become clearer as further passages are examined, not only in this chapter but also in the chapters which follow. Simultaneously, support will be given for our contention that Christ's divine Sonship was of fundamental significance for Paul. The fact that in introducing himself to the unfamiliar Christian community of Rome Paul chose to describe his Gospel as the Gospel of God concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (vs. 4b), bespeaks the central importance of Sonship.<sup>2</sup> "Our Lord" is in his relationship to God, "his Son."

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<sup>1</sup>Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 26-27 is essentially correct, when he says, "Es handelt sich dabei keineswegs um eine 'Zwei-Stufen-Theologie,' die Jesus als den irdischen Messias (im ersten Glied) und als den Inthronisierten (im zweiten Glied) bekennt. So mag vielleicht eine Formel gelautet haben, die hinter der dem Apostel vorgegebenen stand . . ." He is wrong, however, when he assumes that Paul wished to emphasize the "absoluten Gegensatz des Jesus Christus κατὰ σάρκα und, kraft seiner Auferstehung von den Toten, des Jesus Christus im Geist der Glorie." Paul still accepted the fact that Jesus Christ was the Messiah by virtue of his Davidic descent, hence the connection between vs. 2 and 3b; thus κατὰ σάρκα is not merely a statement about his "humanness," but also refers to his descent from David, as it did in the pre-Pauline original.

<sup>2</sup>It is not without significance that Romans contains more references to Jesus Christ as the Son of God than any other Pauline letter. When Rom. 5.10; 8.3-4; and 8.32 are examined, they reveal just why Paul describes the Gospel as being about God's Son. Thus the statements of Rom. 1.1-4 and 9 are given real meaning by what Paul says about the Son of God in later passages in Romans.



C. "In the Gospel of His Son": Rom. 1.9

Rom. 1.9 contains a further instance in which Paul mentions the Gospel of God's Son. He begins in vs. 8 by telling the Christians of Rome that he gives thanks to God through Jesus Christ concerning them because their faith is proclaimed in the whole world. In the latter part of vs. 9 and the first part of vs. 10, he proceeds to maintain that he always mentions them in his prayers. In the first part of vs. 9 Paul offers a solemn proof concerning the truth of his assertion that he makes mention of the Roman Christians without ceasing in his prayers. Since God alone could know the truth of his claim, he calls upon him as his witness. The relative clause "whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of his Son" adds solemnity to the whole statement in which Paul invokes God as his witness.<sup>1</sup> It also emphasizes his special servant relation to God. The relative clause is, in certain respects, a positive affirmation of what Paul said about himself in vss. 1, 3-4. His service to God is a service in the Gospel. He was called to be an apostle and was appointed specifically for the task of preaching the Gospel. Whereas in vss. 1 and 3 he spoke of the "Gospel of God concerning his Son," in vs. 9 he describes his service to God as being "in my spirit in the Gospel of his Son." Although the phrase "in my spirit" is not easily explained, Professor Cranfield may well be right that Paul refers "to his praying as being the inward side of his apostolic service contrasted with the outward side consisting of his preaching."<sup>2</sup> However this may be, "in the Gospel of his Son" means that Paul serves God through his preaching of the Gospel which has God's Son, and what he has done on man's behalf, for its content. From the perspective of this thesis, the important point here is that Paul once again asserts that his Gospel concerns God's Son. His ministry is a service in the Gospel of God's Son. The appropriateness of this description is clearly understandable in light of Paul's

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<sup>1</sup>Michel, Römer, p. 81 describes this as priestly service, but it really refers to Paul's apostolic service as religious service. The reference to the Gospel and the parallelism between vs. 9b and vss. 1 and 3 confirm this.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 77.

conversion experience in which the Son of God was revealed to him so that he might preach him (Gal. 1.16). It is this happening in Paul's life which forms the basis for the statement in Rom. 1.9 and Rom. 1.1-4.

D. "The Son of God who was Preached  
Among You": 2 Cor. 1.19

Second Corinthians 1.19 is the final passage to be examined among the texts where Paul explicitly identifies the content of his Gospel as the Son of God.

1. Contextual Considerations

The passage beginning in 2 Cor. 1.15ff. is somewhat convoluted. Paul undertakes a defense or perhaps an explanation of why he changed his mind about visiting the Corinthians on a planned journey. Apparently the opponents of the apostle seized on this alteration to charge Paul with indecisiveness or more probably being indecisive with disingenuous behavior. While vss. 15-17 set the situation, vss. 18-22 give the appearance of a digression, before Paul offers his explanation for his change of plans in vss. 23ff. This is not quite the case. The "digression" of vss. 18-22 is in reality an important theological affirmation of the certainty and the truth of the Gospel preached by Paul among the Corinthians. It serves to confirm that in Paul's personal dealings with them, his own word was as genuine as that of the Gospel he preached. Thus the phrase in vs. 18, "our word to you" refers both to the word of the Gospel and Paul's personal communications with the Corinthians.<sup>1</sup> In vss. 19-22 he concerns himself with the word of the Gospel preached by him and its immutable certitude attested through the presence of the Spirit in his heart and in the hearts of the Corinthians (vs. 22).

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<sup>1</sup>This is also the view of W.C. van Unnik, "Reisepläne und Amen-Sagen, Zusammenhang und Gedankenfolge in 2 Korinther 1.15-24," Studia Paulina (1953), p. 218 and Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 76. Lietzmann, Korinther, p. 197 (this is in the supplement to the third edition by W.G. Kummel) and Bultmann, Zweite Korinther, pp. 43f. err on opposite sides. Kummel relates the  $\delta$   $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$   $\eta\mu\omega\nu$  of 2 Cor. 1.19 primarily to the missionary preaching of Paul, while Bultmann joins it with vs. 17 and limits it to Paul's travel plans. The context of vss. 15-17 and 19-22 seems to demand the double meaning suggested here and by van Unnik and Professor Barrett.



It is this setting in which his personal word is challenged, and thereby the truth of the Gospel preached by him, that Paul describes the content of his preaching as ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ υἱὸς Ἰησοῦς χριστός, who was not yes and no, but is the final yes of God. W. Kramer claims that the context determines the choice of the title "Son of God" in 2 Cor. 1.19, as in Rom. 1.9 and 1 Cor. 1.9.<sup>1</sup> In the preceding verse (18), Paul asserts, "But God is to be trusted (πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεός) and he will bear witness that our word to you is not Yes and No."<sup>2</sup> Kramer believes that the phrase "πιστὸς ὁ θεός" in vs. 18 caused Paul to choose the designation "Son of God" in the Christological statement of the following verse. This is not correct, however. The statement concerning the Son of God in vs. 19 is far enough removed from the introductory clause "God is to be trusted" of vs. 18 that this does not seem to be the motive. Moreover, if the Son designation of vs. 19 were engendered by the words "God is to be trusted" in vs. 18, then it is surprising that Paul added τοῦ θεοῦ instead of αὐτοῦ with ὁ υἱός.

## 2. "The Son of God who was Preached"

What Paul declares to be the content of his preaching in vs. 19 is not an unintentional construction, but a very precise description of it. He preached Jesus Christ, the Son of God. An examination of Paul's statements where the verbs κηρύσσειν and εὐαγγελίζειν occur and the noun of action εὐαγγέλιον confirms that when a personal object is employed with them it is either "his (God's) Son" (cf. Rom. 1.9; Gal. 1.16; also Rom. 1.1-4), "Christ" (cf. 1 Cor. 1.23; 9.12; 2 Cor. 2.12; 9.13; 10.14; Gal. 1.7; Phil. 1.15, etc.), "Jesus" (cf. 2 Cor. 11.4); or "God" (cf. Rom. 1.1; 15.16; 2 Cor. 11.7; 1 Thess. 2.2, 8, 9).<sup>3</sup> In terms of this varied usage, 2 Cor. 1.19 gives the appearance of a thoughtful statement of the content of the apostle's preaching bringing together all of the standard terms used as personal objects of κηρύσσειν, εὐαγγελίζειν, and εὐαγγέλιον. Paul utilized this full and precise statement of

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<sup>1</sup>Kramer, Christ, pp. 183-184.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 76 suggests this translation of a typically elliptical Pauline text.

<sup>3</sup>The exception to this general usage in 2 Thess. 1.8 has been discussed above.

the content of his preaching in 2 Cor. 1.19 for an obvious reason: he wanted to leave no doubt about the content of his Gospel; his preaching was not equivocal, but concerned the man Jesus Christ who stood in the unique position of God's Son. All the promises of God (vs. 20) are Yes in him because he is the Son of the trustworthy God (vs. 18), who according to Paul's preaching brings salvation to those who believe (cf. Rom. 5.10; 8.3-4, 32; Gal. 2.20; 4.4-5; Col. 1.13-14).<sup>1</sup>

Beginning from his encounter with the risen Christ whom God revealed to be his Son, Paul understood Christ's relation with God in terms of his unique Sonship. The revelation of Jesus Christ as God's Son was foundational for Paul both because it provided the starting point for his subsequent Christological reflection and because, as a result of the Damascus road experience, Paul considered his Gospel to be about the Son of God. Not only does Gal. 1.15-16 make this latter point, but also Rom. 1.1-4 where Paul refers to his call to apostleship and appointment to the Gospel of God concerning his Son. This latter text recalls in essence the same Damascus road experience as Gal. 1.15-16 (cf. Rom. 1.9 as well). From all this it should be quite clear that the term υἱός when applied to Jesus Christ by Paul is not so much a title of honor, as the expression of Christ's "relatedness" to God, for it was this which Paul learned on the road to Damascus. As we shall see in the chapters which follow, the Father-Son relation between God and Christ is absolutely essential for understanding Paul's Gospel and for understanding his Christological thought as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup>C.F.D. Moule, The Phenomenon of the New Testament (1967), p. 54 maintains that in 2 Cor. 1.19-20: "We are evidently overhearing a formula of early Christian prayer: it ends 'through Christ Jesus thy Son' (vs. 19), Amen." This is improbable for the reason suggested above. Paul chose the words "the Son of God, Jesus Christ" because it was in fact the content of his Gospel.



## CHAPTER V

### THE SENDING AND THE COMING OF THE SON

The soteriological significance of Christ's divine Sonship comes into the foreground when Gal. 4.4-5; Rom. 8.3-4, and Phil. 2.6-11 are examined. The first two passages presuppose the pre-existence of the Son of God,<sup>1</sup> whom God sent into the world to accomplish his saving purpose. Phil. 2.6-11 makes it explicit. The value of these texts for understanding Paul's Son of God Christology is enormous because they begin to make clear why Christ's Sonship was of such importance to Paul. The Son, who had been God's agent in creation (Col. 1.13-20), was also his personal agent in bringing salvation to mankind.<sup>2</sup> In other words, we hope to show that Christ's Sonship relation with God is a fundamental feature of Paul's soteriology. When this point is established we shall then be well on our way to understanding the sense in which the "Son of God" was the content of Paul's Gospel.

#### A. The Sending of the Son: Gal. 4.4-5

For more than half a century New Testament scholars have claimed that Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4 are or, more often, include a somewhat variable pre-Pauline traditional formulation commonly called a "sending formula."<sup>3</sup> E. Schweizer, who accepts the

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<sup>1</sup>Ridderbos, Paul, p. 69 observes: "God sent his Son (Rom. 8.3; Gal. 4.4), and this sending does not create the Sonship, but presupposes it."

<sup>2</sup>Cullmann, Christology, pp. 293-294 makes the interesting observation concerning Sonship in Paul: "we can say of the 'Son of God' what we said earlier of the Logos: he is God as God reveals himself in redemptive action." It is not quite, true, however, to say as Cullmann does: "It is only meaningful to speak of the Son in view of God's revelatory action, not in view of his being." (Ridderbos in the reference in the previous footnote is objecting to this very claim by Cullmann.)

<sup>3</sup>This view goes back at least to the work of A. Seeberg, Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit (1903), pp. 59ff. according to Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 304. Among those holding a similar view in more recent times are Hahn (p. 304), Kramer, Christ, pp. 111-115 (he distinguishes two types on the basis of the verbs ἀποστέλλειν and

"sending formula" idea, has recently located the pre-Christian background of this formula in Jewish Wisdom and Philonic Logos thought.<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis on the pre-Pauline "sending formula" and its religious-historical background has had an unfortunate side effect. Because of the focus of attention on the non-Pauline origin of the "sending formula" and tradition, scholars have tended to ignore the significance of Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4 in Pauline thought.<sup>2</sup> An unspoken assumption seems to operate. If something is pre-Pauline (or non-Pauline) in origin, then one need not take account of its theological importance for Paul. This unfortunately leads to distortions in Paul's theology. Even if there is as much pre-Pauline material in Paul's letters as some maintain, it is still necessary to assume that the apostle utilized such material because he was in essential agreement with it. He must have considered it a valid expression of the Gospel and have understood his own theology to be in continuity with the theology embedded in the traditional formulations which he used,<sup>3</sup> though he may have on occasions made modifications in such material to conform it more closely with his own thought.

It is our belief that Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4 are important pieces of evidence for a crucial aspect of Paul's theology, one which is often overlooked, in part because of the overemphasis on the supposed pre-Pauline formula embedded in these passages. Quite apart from this, however, the pre-Pauline origin of the "sending formula" and its supposed background in Wisdom and Logos thought are far less

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πέμπειν); F.F. Bruce, "Galatians Problems 5. Galatians and Christian Origins," BJRL 55 (1972-73), p. 266 (though he only refers to Gal. 4.4-5); Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 271-272; H. Paulsen, Überlieferung und Auslegung in Römer 8 (1974), pp. 41ff.; Schweizer, "ὁὗτος," pp. 374ff. and 383f.; Talbert, "Descending-Ascending Redeemer," pp. 435f.; and Hengel, Son of God, p. 11. Hengel's acceptance of this idea is somewhat remarkable in light of his fierce criticism of W. Kramer's treatment of tradition in "Christologie und Chronologie," pp. 53ff.

<sup>1</sup>E. Schweizer, "Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund der 'Sendungsformel' Gal. 4.4f.; Rm. 8.3f.; Joh. 3.16f.; 1 Joh. 4.9," ZNW 57 (1966), pp. 199-210. See also his earlier essay "Zur Herkunft der Präexistenzvorstellung bei Paulus," Neotestamentica (1963), pp. 105-109.

<sup>2</sup>This same problem exists with respect to Phil. 2.6-11 and Col. 1.15-20.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. R.H. Fuller's comment, supra, p. 6.



firmly based than is often realized. In order to provide more balance in the scholarly discussion of Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4, it is necessary to dispute the prevailing assumptions regarding these passages. This in turn will serve to heighten the significance of the sending of the Son of God in the theology of Paul. It is perhaps best to begin with Schweizer's view concerning the pre-Christian background.

## 1. The So-Called Sending Tradition

### a. The Thesis of E. Schweizer

Schweizer argues that in Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4, as well as in Jn. 3.16-17 and 1 Jn. 4.9, the categories of pre-existent Wisdom and Logos stand in the background. He puts his case in the following way:

Da im Bereich der hellenistisch-jüdischen Weisheits- und Logospekulation sowohl die Sendung als auch der Gottessohntitel zentral auftauchen, bei Philo (Agric. 51) im gleichen Kontext, da ferner die Struktur der Doppelsendung von Sohn und Geist in Gal. 4.4-6 nur im Schema von Sap. 9.10-17 (wo auch das bei Paulus sonst nie verwendete Verbum ἐξαποστέλλειν auftaucht) eine Parallele findet, da endlich nur in diesem Kreis auch der Hinweis auf die dem einen Sohn entsprechenden 'Söhne Gottes' erscheint (Philo, Conf. Ling. 145-148), wie es Gal. 4.6 der Fall ist, dürfte sich dort die Wurzel der Vorstellung finden.<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental question is whether Paul (or whoever formulated the sending idea if it was not Paul) arrived at the sending idea through transferring to Christ the sending conception associated with Wisdom and Logos thought. This is quite a different question from the problem of the influence of Wisdom and Logos speculation on Christology in general and the notion of pre-existence in particular. When the passages suggested by Schweizer are examined closely, it is far from certain whether his parallels are of any real significance. In the first place, the reference to Agric. 51 is of dubious value. The passage does not state that the Logos, firstborn Son of God, was sent by God into the world; rather it concerns the role of the Logos in preserving and ordering the universe. For reasons which are not very clear, Philo quotes in this context Ex. 23.20, a verse which speaks of God sending an angel before Israel. It must be emphasized, however,

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<sup>1</sup> Schweizer, "Sendungsformel," pp. 207-208.

that this verse is not directly applied to the Logos nor for that matter does Ex. 23.20 even concern the sending of an angel into the world. To suggest from Agric. 51 that the sending idea and the "Son of God" title were closely connected in Wisdom and Logos speculation is simply unjustified. There is, in fact, no other evidence in Philo to substantiate the claim that the Logos and Son of God ideas are brought together in contexts where the Logos is said to be sent into the world. Neither are there instances in which Wisdom, designated as the daughter of God, is said to be sent into the world.<sup>1</sup>

Schweizer confuses the question at hand when he introduces the matter of "die dem einem Sohn  $\bar{\epsilon}$ ntsprechenden 'Söhne Gottes'" in Conf. Ling. 145-148. To our knowledge, no one suggests that Gal. 4.6 has any particular connection to the "sending formula," and certainly Conf. Ling. 145-148 has nothing to do with the sending of the Logos into the world. But apart from this problem, the one Son, the Logos, does not relate others as sons to God, as in Gal. 4.6. Quite the contrary, those who are not worthy to become sons of God in their own right are urged to become sons of the Logos (Conf. Ling. 147).

It is true that in Wis. of Sol. 9.10, 17 Solomon asks God to send Wisdom to him from his glorious throne (vs. 10) and then claims God has sent the holy Spirit (vs. 17). Once again, however, Schweizer focuses his discussion of the background of the "Sendungsformel" on Gal. 4.4-6, and so, once again, it must be pointed out that no evidence exists to suggest that Gal. 4.6 is part of the "sending formula."<sup>2</sup> It is not even correct to describe Wis. 9.10, 17 in terms of a "Doppelsendung." In vs. 10 Wisdom is requested from God (note the aorist imperatives  $\epsilon\chi\alpha\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\lambda\omicron\nu$  and  $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\mu\psi\omicron\nu$ ), and in vs. 17 she is sent. The words  $\alpha\delta\ \epsilon\delta\acute{\omega}\kappa\alpha\varsigma\ \sigma\omicron\phi\acute{\iota}\alpha\nu$  and  $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\mu\psi\alpha\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{o}\nu\ \sigma\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  in vs. 17 are parallel. This means that Wisdom and the Holy Spirit are identical, ruling out any talk of a double

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<sup>1</sup>See the helpful concordance of A.S. Carmen, "Philo's Doctrine of the Divine Father and the Virgin Mother," American Journal of Theology 9 (1905), pp. 491-518.

<sup>2</sup>Both R. Schnackenburg, "Christologie," p. 327 and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, p. 148 express reservations about Schweizer's supposed parallels between Wis. 9.10-17 and Gal. 4.4-6.



sending in Wis. 9.10-17. When account is taken of these facts, the main similarity between Wis. 9.10-17 and so-called "Sendungsformel" is that in both a figure is sent into the world. But the differences far outweigh the similarities. In both Paul and John, the emphasis is on the one-time physical incarnation of the one sent and upon the universal saving significance of his coming. In Wis. 9-10, Wisdom is the Spirit of God who illuminates righteous men in the way of salvation in every generation; but by her very nature Wisdom is never incarnate in a historical personage nor does she come to bring the possibility of salvation to all men. These basic differences make recourse to Wis. 9.10-17 as the immediate background for the "Sendungsformel" problematic.<sup>1</sup>

Schweizer's case for the influence of a widely held Wisdom-Logos sending idea on the Christian "sending formula" is without foundation. At best it might be argued that the Christian "sending formula" was dependent upon Wis. 9.10, 17, but the differences between Christ and Wisdom as "sent ones" must not be ignored. Since we believe the origin of Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3 are primarily explicable in terms of Paul's own thought, we shall come back to the problem of the origin of the sending idea later. Now it is necessary to turn to the question of whether a genuine pre-Pauline "Sendungsformel" is preserved in Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4.

#### b. The Problem of the Pre-Pauline

##### "Sending Formula"

Although a certain amount of diversity exists regarding the exact composition of the pre-Pauline Christian "sending formula," the majority of recent scholars refer to the work of W. Kramer as a basis for discussing the "sending formula" in Paul. For this reason, Kramer's work may be treated as more or less normative,<sup>2</sup> though it should be mentioned that most scholars do not bother with Kramer's differentiation between Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4 on the

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<sup>1</sup>The Jewish angel tradition put forward by Talbert "Descending-Ascending Redeemer," pp. 422ff., 436, provides an interesting parallel to Gal. 4.4-5, but the differences between such figures and Paul's Son of God are appreciable when a close comparison is undertaken.

<sup>2</sup>Kramer, Christ, pp. 111-115. For others holding similar views see the references in note 3, p. 109.

grounds of the differing verbs for sending, ἐξαποστέλλειν and πέμπειν.

Kramer specifies that two conditions must be met if Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4 are to be treated as formulas: there must be "fixed key words and a clear formal pattern." But he adds the stipulation that "the wording may within limits be subject to variation."<sup>1</sup> On the basis of Jn. 3.17, 1 Jn. 4.9, 10, 14, Kramer maintains that the "sending formula" consists of a statement concerning the sending of the Son and then a final clause with ἵνα, or as in 1 Jn. 4.10, 14 a phrase in apposition, which discloses the saving significance of the sending of the Son. It is the existence of the material in John and 1 John which leads Kramer and many others to speak of a pre-Pauline formula in Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4.<sup>2</sup> The problem of chronology never occurs to Kramer or any of those taking a position similar to his. The utilization of documents written almost fifty years later than Gal. 4.4-5 as evidence for a pre-Pauline or even a "nebenpaulinisch" tradition is highly questionable.<sup>3</sup> It is at least as plausible if not more so, that the Johannine occurrences are in some way, directly or indirectly, dependent upon the Pauline formulation. Apart from this possibility,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 113. Kramer, unlike most other scholars, relates Rom. 8.3 to the phrase, "the Father, who sent (ὁ πέμψας) me" in John. This he claims is a variation of the "Sendungsformel," but he finds that Rom. 8.3 merely preserves a fragment of the original πέμπειν formula (p. 115). The similarity between Rom. 8.3-4 and the construction from John mentioned by Kramer is quite remote. For example, the term "Son" never occurs in John's sending statements because these are invariably spoken by Jesus. Kramer's inability to isolate anything more than a fragment of the formula in Rom. 8.3 undermines his position that a pre-Pauline formula is present there at all. P. von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8 als Beispiel paulinischer Soteriologie (1975), p. 145, n. 5 agrees with Kramer in seeing an original πέμπειν formula in Rom. 8.3-4 which was distinct from the ἐξαποστέλλειν one.

<sup>3</sup> Hengel, "Christologie und Chronologie," p. 46 justifiably asserts, "Der Aufweis, dass einzelne christologische und soteriologische Formulierungen auch in einem stets späteren-ausserpaulinischen Kontext erschienen, reicht noch nicht aus, um sei eo ipso als 'vorpaulinischen', d. h. dem Apostel ursprünglich fremdes Gut zu identifizieren." Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 139ff. effectively criticizes Hengel's views in Son of God, pp. 10-11, 66ff. which seem to indicate a shift in Hengel's thought to make room for a pre-existent Christology before Paul and for the pre-Pauline existence of the "sending formula."



it is also just conceivable that there is no connection between either a pre-Pauline or the Pauline formulation and the Johannine material. If one accepted the pre-existence of the Son of God then naturally his incarnation could be conceived as a sending from God for some divine purpose. Such a thought could easily have occurred to two (or more) first century Christian thinkers independently. The differences between Gal. 4.4-5 and the various Johannine passages mentioned by Kramer, both in the order of the words and the actual words themselves are striking.

Gal. 4.4-5: ἔξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον, ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν.

Rom. 8.3-4: ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν . . .

Jn. 3.17: οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ.

1 Jn. 4.9 τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἀπέσταλκεν ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα ζήσωμεν δι' αὐτοῦ.

1 Jn. 4.10: (God) ἀπέστειλεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἵλασμον περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν.

1 Jn. 4.14: ὁ πατὴρ ἀπέσταλκεν τὸν υἱὸν σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου.

The obvious differences in these passages suggest, if anything, not a fixed "Sendungsformel" but a common idea that God sent his Son for a saving purpose.

The very ambiguity of the evidence, unrecognized by Kramer and many other scholars, cautions against their excessive confidence in a pre-Pauline "Sendungsformel." At best, the material from Paul and John might allow for a type of pre-Pauline "fill in the blank" formula: ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ (ἵνα). . . . But it must be asked with Kim whether or not Christ's pre-existence, presupposed by the "sending formula," was even thought of in the genuine pre-Pauline church.<sup>1</sup> In this uncertain situation it is much more probable that Gal. 4.4-5 is an original formulation by Paul and that Rom. 8.3-4

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<sup>1</sup>Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 139ff.

is an allusion to the ground thought of Gal. 4.4-5. This possibility has much in its favor in light of the work of J. Blank. He has shown that a close parallel exists between Gal. 3.13-14 and 4.4-5 in vocabulary as well as thought structure.<sup>1</sup> If Paul were capable of formulating Gal. 3.13-14, and no one seems to doubt this, then he may also have created Gal. 4.4-5 from various other features in his theology besides those found in Gal. 3.13-14. Having said this, however, the possibility that Gal. 4.4-5, or at least its basic idea, had a place in the preaching of Paul cannot be ruled out. This supposition is all the more likely since Paul closely connected the Sonship of Christ with the preaching of his Gospel. Statements like Gal. 4.4-5 were then, in all probability, characteristic of Paul's proclamation of the Gospel.

## 2. Contextual Survey

Gal. 4.4-5 occurs within an important theological argument from which it must not be isolated if its significance in Pauline thought is to be appreciated. Galatians was written to an essentially Gentile Christian community under pressure from Judaizing Christians.<sup>2</sup> The Judaizers sought to make the promise of salvation contained in the Gospel dependent upon membership in ethnic Israel and obedience to the Torah (see 2.15-3.29). Paul counted this an insidious attack on the true Gospel of Christ (1.6-7) which threatened to lead to a re-enslavement of the Gentile Christians of Galatia (4.9) and to their exclusion from grace (5.4). The lines of argument in Gal. 3.1-29 are extremely complex and need not concern us here<sup>3</sup> since Gal. 4.1 introduces the specific line of reasoning which leads to 4.4-5. In this section, which extends to vs. 11, the apostle sets out the choice facing the Galatians: will they remain free sons of God, or return to bondage, albeit to a slightly different master than they had had formerly? Gal. 4.4-7 constitutes a declaration of the present position of the Galatians before God and its effective causes in the redemptive death of God's Son and the presence of the Spirit of God's Son in

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<sup>1</sup>Blank, Paulus, pp. 260-263. Cf. also Wengst, Christologische Formeln, p. 59, n. 22 who strongly criticises Kramer's position.

<sup>2</sup>See infra, pp. 296-303.

<sup>3</sup>See infra, pp. 309ff. for a more detailed discussion of Gal. 3.1-29.



their hearts. Like Gal. 3.1-5, where Paul builds on the experience of his hearers, Gal. 4.6 refers to an actual experience of the Galatians.

Gal. 4.1-2 depicts a more or less familiar legal situation in the environment of the Greco-Roman world.<sup>1</sup> A minor was placed under a guardian (ἐπίτροπος) by his father until the time appointed for him to receive his inheritance. In the meantime, the inheritance was managed by a steward (οἰκονόμος) until the designated time. According to Paul, this state of affairs renders the heir, who is really the lord of the estate, no better than a slave. In vs. 3 Paul applies the illustration of vss. 1-2 to the pre-Christian experience of Jews and Gentiles alike: "When we were minors, we were enslaved under the elemental things of the world." The exact nature of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου has long been debated and need not concern us here.<sup>2</sup> The important factor for Paul was that both Jews and Gentiles were in a state of servitude from which they required redemption. All human history before Christ, both Jewish and Gentile history, was characterized by the bondage and enslavement of humanity to forces beyond its control (cf. Gal. 3.13, 22-24; 4.8-10).<sup>3</sup>

### 3. The Sending of the Son at The "Fullness of Time"

Paul believed and taught that God had initiated the act which, in principle, ended the ineluctable enslavement of humanity in the old, pre-Christian age of world history. The actual end of enslavement at the personal level was only possible, however, through faith in Christ (Gal. 3.14, 22-26). According to Gal. 4.4-5, "When

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<sup>1</sup> See S. Belkin, "The Problem of Paul's Background," *JBL* 54 (1935), pp. 52ff. and D.R. Moore-Crispin, The Sources and Meaning of ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ and Related Terminology in Galatians, University of London Ph.D. Thesis (1975) for discussions concerning the legal background of Gal. 4.1-2.

<sup>2</sup> For recent discussions of the problem see E. Schweizer, "Die 'Elemente des Welt,' Gal. 4, 3.9; Kol. 2, 8.20," *Verborum Veritas* (1970), pp. 245-249; G. Delling, "στοιχεῖον," *TDNT* 7, pp. 670-687; and Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 293-303.

<sup>3</sup> Paul appears to mix his images in Gal. 4.1-7. On the one hand he speaks of sons and heirs who were like slaves in vss. 1-3, and on the other hand he employs the redemption and adoption ideas in vs. 5.

the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." This concise statement presents a conception of fundamental importance for grasping the significance of Christ's divine Sonship and for understanding the connection between Christology and salvation in Paul's thought.

The sending of the Son by God is of paramount importance to the ground structure of Paul's theology because the Son represents the Father in the most immediate way possible. God has acted in the person of his Son to affect eschatological salvation. The man Jesus was not merely one more prophet, not merely a righteous martyr; in fact he was not even the Messiah of popular expectation. Such figures did not have the ability to accomplish deliverance from sin and death and to renew man's relationship to the righteous God, the true needs of mankind in Paul's eyes. Only God could do these things, and he had, in the person of his Son who became a man to bring God's eschatological salvation.

#### a. The "Fullness of Time"

The first thing to note in beginning to support this thesis from Gal. 4.4-5 is the introductory dependent temporal clause of vs. 4: ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ. . . . Vs. 4a is in the first instance related to the temporal phrase "ἄχρι τῆς προθεσμίας τοῦ πατρὸς" of vs. 2b. Behind the father of vs. 2 stands God who determined the duration of mankind's minority with its concomitant enslavement. The sending of the Son effected a change in the condition of humanity by providing for liberation from the old powers which brought involuntary bondage (cf. Gal. 5.1). Thus the divinely determined period of servitude was brought to an end when the divinely fixed fullness of time arrived and the Son of God was sent to redeem men from bondage. The statement concerning the fullness of time is not merely determined by the train of thought in Gal. 4.1-5; it conforms with and is derived from Paul's understanding of God's saving history.<sup>1</sup> This in turn, has its origin in Paul's Jewish heritage.

The distinctive Jewish view of time consists in the fact that God is the Lord of all history, from beginning to end; it is he who

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<sup>1</sup>For a major treatment of Paul's conception of history, see U. Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus (1968).



fixes the generations (cf. Is. 41.4) and accomplishes his purposes in history (cf. Ps. 135.6-12).<sup>1</sup> Jewish interest in time focused on two things. In the first place, the Jewish people were interested in God's saving activity in the past: God's dealings with the patriarchs, his leading in the exodus, his giving of the law, his setting up of the Davidic throne, his judgment in the exile, and his restoration of the people to the land. In all of these things they saw the hand of God in human history. The other focus of attention was the hope for God's final and decisive intervention in human history. The Jewish people of the post-Old Testament period believed that this would result in Israel receiving her rightful place of pre-eminence in the eternal economy of God (cf. Dan. 7-12; Jub. 1.23ff.; Ps. Sol. 17, 18; 1QS 4.18-23). The hoped for eschatological saving act of God was naturally associated with the completion of the present age, with the filling up of time (cf. 4 Ezra 4.37; 11.44; CD 4.3-10; Tob. 14.5), and with the coming of the Messianic figure at the end (4 Ezra 13; 4Q flor. 1-2; 2 Baruch 30.1).

The "fullness of time" cannot be understood apart from the Christ event which occurred at the "fullness of time." What then does Paul mean by the "fullness of time" in Gal. 4.4? G. Delling is essentially correct when he explains: "The saying does not refer to the abolition of time but to the fact that God's saving work has come directly into history; in the historical event of the earthly Jesus . . . God accomplishes His eschatological act."<sup>2</sup> This is so because the period of time previously fixed by God in accordance with his saving plan had elapsed. Paul's belief that the "fullness of time" had come, arose from his conviction that God had acted decisively in Christ to bring about eschatological salvation but in quite a different way from what was expected in popular Jewish

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<sup>1</sup>G. Delling, "χρόνος κτλ.," TDNT 9, pp. 590-591. See also M. Barth, Ephesians 1-3 (1974), pp. 128-130. He points out, "The OT, apocalyptic, Qumranite, rabbinic, and Pauline concepts of time agree in considering time as something formed and filled by a specific content or person. . . . time is created and maintained for the elect servants of God and filled by the specific deeds of God" (p. 129).

<sup>2</sup>G. Delling, "πλήρωμα," TDNT 6, p. 305. Delling theologizes too much when he claims, "With the sending of the Son time is fulfilled absolutely." Cf. Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 44-45. It is probably truer in terms of Paul's thought, to say that the final resurrection brings the absolute fulfillment of time.

thought.<sup>1</sup> He maintained that Christ had been given up to death for mankind's sin (cf. 2 Cor. 5.21), in order to deliver those who would believe from the present evil age (Gal. 1.4). The ends of the ages had come upon mankind (cf. 1 Cor. 7.29, 31; 10.11), and the day of salvation had arrived (cf. 2 Cor. 6.2), but the present age continues until the final resurrection which ushers in the end (cf. 1 Cor. 15.20-28, 51-52; 1 Thess. 5.1ff.). Thus, the expression the "fullness of time" has an important place in the salvation understanding of Paul. By itself it signifies the arrival of the long hoped for time of God's eschatological salvation, but for Paul its meaning was inseparably connected to the fact that God's eschatological salvation had come through the sending of the Son of God into human history (cf. Eph. 1.9-10).<sup>2</sup> It is to the significance of the sending of the Son of God that we must now turn.

#### b. The Sending of the Son

The sending statement of Gal. 4.4-5 offers a crucial insight into the understanding of the relationship between Christology, salvation, and God in the thought of Paul. It has already been shown that little positive evidence exists to remove the formation of Gal. 4.4-5 from Paul, and Blank has positively shown that the basic thoughts of vss. 4-5 are Pauline. For these reasons, it was suggested that Gal. 4.4-5 is genuinely Pauline in origin. This is important because it means that the contents of the statement represent a theological reflection of Paul which arose from his basic understanding of Christology and soteriology, though they have a specific intention within the argument of Galatians.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Ridderbos, Paul, p. 53 where he says, "Who Christ is and what he does, what the relationship is between the time of salvation that has been entered upon with him and the future still to be expected, all this is not determined by eschatological-theological presuppositions, but is only gathered by the apostle from the unexpected and overwhelming manner in which God in Jesus Christ has given and will yet give the fulfillment of the redemptive promise."

<sup>2</sup>J. Baumgarten, Paulus und die Apokalyptik: Die Auslegung apokalyptischer Überlieferungen in den echten Paulusbriefen (1975), p. 193 maintains concerning Gal. 4.1-7: "Paulus übernimmt hier eine theozentrische Zeitauffassung, die er aber insofern kritisch rezipiert, als er die Sendung des Sohnes als Heilseignis (V 5) mit der Zeitprädikation τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου belegt und damit die Erfüllung der Zeit christologisch-soteriologisch und somit gegenwartsorientiert und nicht futurisch-eschatologisch im Blick auf Parusie, Auferweckung, Gericht."



The beginning point for all of Paul's theological thought is God. Whatever else one may say about his theology, Paul's theology is, at its root, Theocentric (cf. Rom. 11.36; 1 Cor. 8.6; 15.28).<sup>1</sup> This Theocentricity is clearly in evidence in Gal. 4.4-5. Eschatological salvation begins with the decision of God. He determined when the fullness of time had come, and he initiated the events leading to eschatological salvation through sending his Son into human existence. Paul's choice of the verb ἐξαποστέλλειν in vs. 4 is not without significance in this context. The same verb appears in vs. 6, but these are the only two instances of its use in Paul. He employs the closely related verb ἀποστέλλειν only three times: Rom. 10.15; 1 Cor. 1.17; and 2 Cor. 12.17. In both Rom. 10.15 and 1 Cor. 1.17 Paul refers to the sending of preachers of the Gospel; in the second of these passages, he speaks specifically of his own sending by Christ. 2 Cor. 12.17 concerns Paul's sending of his associates as his representatives with the Corinthians. Behind these usages, including those of Gal. 4.4, 6, stands the meaning of the two verbs in both secular Greek and the LXX. In non-Biblical Greek (ἐξ)αποστέλλειν often implied a connection between the sender and the person sent based on a commission whereby the one sent officially represented the one sending him.<sup>2</sup> This connotation

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und ewiges Leben versteht." He proceeds by asserting, "Paulus versteht also die christologisch-soteriologisch gefüllte Jetztzeit als Mitte und Schlüssel der Zeit, auf die die Geschichte zuläuft und von der sie herkommt." Paul is not interested in the "Jetztzeit als Mitte . . . der Zeit." He conceives of the present time as the end of the ages (1 Cor. 10.11) in which the present world is passing away (1 Cor. 7.31) because God's eschatological salvation has come into history in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The fullness of time understood "christologisch-soteriologisch" is the necessary beginning of the end of all things when the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment will occur and the Kingdom will be given over to God (1 Cor. 15.20-28). The present time is only an interval between the decisive salvation event which has already transpired and the consummation which lies in the future. Its purpose is to allow for the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles until the full number come into salvation (Rom. 9-11). Cf. O. Cullmann, Salvation in History (1967), pp. 250 ff.

<sup>1</sup>The best study available on the Theocentricity of Pauline theology is Thüsing, Per Christum in Deum. In a very interesting essay entitled, "The Theme of Romans," Apostolic History and the Gospel, pp. 249-263, L. Morris argues that Romans concentrates especially on God: "Romans is a book about God."

<sup>2</sup>For the evidence, see K.H. Rengstorff, "ἀποστέλλω κτλ.," TDNT 1, pp. 398-400, 406.

made (ἐξ)αποστέλλειν ideal for translating the Hebrew root  $\text{נָּחַץ}$  because in the Old Testament  $\text{נָּחַץ}$  often appears in contexts concerned with the special commissioning of messengers to represent the one sending them, whether God, king, or some other figure. The one sent was of importance only to the extent that he represented in his own person the one sending him, and therefore the stress was on the sender rather than the one sent.<sup>1</sup> The theologically pregnant usages of  $\text{נָּחַץ}$  in the Hebrew Bible and (ἐξ)αποστέλλειν in the LXX are those which refer to the sending of messengers from God, both human and superhuman. Among those specifically said to be sent by God are angels (Gen. 24.7, 40; Ex. 23.20-21), Moses (Ex. 3.10, 12; 5.22, Micah 6.4), and various prophets (Is. 6.8; Jer. 1.7; 7.25; Ezek. 2.4; Hagg. 1.12; Zech. 4.9; Mal. 3.1). The common feature with all those sent by God is that they do not act on their own initiative but carry out divinely appointed tasks as God's representatives.<sup>2</sup>

The meaning of ἐξαποστέλλειν in Gal. 4.4 (and 6) is closely linked with the special religious usage of the term and its synonym, ἀποστέλλειν, in the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup> It emphasizes the initiative of God in sending his Son and underscores the representative function of the Son in fulfilling the purposes of God.<sup>4</sup> The "sending" depicted in Gal. 4.4-5, however, stands in radical distinction to

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 401.

<sup>2</sup> This idea is also true of hypostasized Wisdom in Wis. 9.10, a passage previously mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> ἀποστέλλειν occurs frequently in the Gospels. It is used especially of Jesus' sending forth the disciples (cf. Mt. 10.5; Mk. 3.14; 6.7; Lk. 9.2; Jn. 4.38; 17.18) and of Jesus' own sending by God (cf. Mt. 15.24; Mk. 9.37; Lk. 9.48; Jn. 3.17; 5.36, 38; 17.3, 8, 21, 25; see also 1 Jn. 4.9, 10, 14). Implicit (sometimes explicit) in these passages is the commissioning of the one sent by the one sending him. The one sent represents the one sending him in executing an assigned task. The religious usage of the Gospels is paralleled in Acts, though it is normally the community which sends people instead of Christ (Acts 3.20, 26; 8.14; 9.17; 15.27; 19.22; 22.21; 28.28). Outside of the Gospels and Acts the term is only very occasionally encountered (12 times including the 3 in Paul). ἐξαποστέλλειν is confined to Luke-Acts (10 times) and the 2 occurrences in Paul. The representative-commission aspect of the term is found in Acts 11.22; 12.11.

<sup>4</sup> The only commentator known to us who recognizes the significance of ἐξαποστέλλειν in referring to the representative function of the one sent is J.B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (1884), p. 168.



every other "sending" in Jewish history. In former times God sent angels and prophets to do his bidding in a variety of matters; but according to Paul, God sent his Son in the fullness of time (cf. Heb. 1.1-2; Mk. 12.1-12) to bring about his eschatological salvation, the very salvation the prophets had often spoken about (cf. Rom. 1.2). The Son thus differed from every other person or angel sent from God by virtue of his relation with God and by virtue of the purpose for which he was sent.

In Gal. 4.4-5 the term "Son" is not simply an honorific title; rather it expresses, in a word, the intimate relationship of the one sent with the one sending him.<sup>1</sup> Neither humans nor angels had hitherto shared in this unique relationship. The one entity to whom Jews ascribed a similar intimate relation with God was the figure of pre-existent Wisdom (cf. Wis. 8.3-4). For this reason alone, it is not difficult to see why the attributes of Wisdom were transferred to the person of Christ very early on (cf. 1 Cor. 8.6; Rom. 10.6-7; Col. 1.15-23).<sup>2</sup> One of the characteristics of Wisdom which Paul predicated of Christ was pre-existence (cf. the passages just cited along with Phil. 2.6f.). In Gal. 4.4 the words "God sent his Son, born of a woman," presuppose the pre-existence of the Son so that the intimate Father-Son relation implied by vs. 4 extends backwards to the period prior to the coming of the Son into human existence. The parallel phrases γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός and γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμου of vs. 4 specify two concentric spheres into which the Son was sent to represent God. The former attests that

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<sup>1</sup>Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, p. 205 is not strictly correct when he says that Gal. 4.4ff. constitutes a "soteriological interpretation of the title 'Son'." Paul is not concerned about the title as such in Gal. 4.4-5 but the relationship of the one sent with God who sent him. Schweizer, "Uíós," pp. 375-376 rightly sees that the idea of Gal. 4.4 presupposes "the heavenly closeness of the pre-existent Son to God" and that the Son of God idea "constitutes His significance as the One sent down from heaven to earth." He adds, "The community is thus given a form of speech by which it can distinguish the sending of Jesus quite unequivocally from that of prophets and teachers and even angels." Where we disagree with Schweizer is in his claim that this idea was ready to hand from Wisdom and Logos speculation. On this see the discussion supra.

<sup>2</sup>On the transfer of Wisdom attributes to Christ see W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (1967<sup>2</sup>), pp. 147-176; E. Schweizer, "Präexistenzvorstellung bei Paulus," pp. 106-109; idem, "Aufnahme und Korrektur jüdischer Sophiatheologie im Neuen Testament," Neotestamentica (1963), pp. 110-121, and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 143ff.

the (pre-existent) Son of God actually became a man in history, while the latter delimits his human existence by indicating that he lived under the law of Moses. On the basis of Gal. 4.4bc, it is both possible and justifiable to maintain that Paul possessed a bona fide conception of Christ's incarnation. But this assertion regarding Gal. 4.4 requires a crucial qualification which J. Blank has aptly expressed: "Paulus sieht also das Menschsein Jesu grundlegend unter soteriologischem und heilsgeschichtlichem Aspekt, nicht in einem rein metaphysischen Sinn und auch nicht rein historisch."<sup>1</sup> The soteriological significance of Gal. 4.4-5 must now receive attention.

#### 4. The Soteriological Significance of Gal. 4.4-5

Paul does not have one exclusive way of describing God's eschatological salvation. Rom. 3 and 4 describe it principally in terms of justification from sin, while 2 Cor. 5.18ff. emphasizes both reconciliation and justification (cf. Rom. 5.9-10). Gal. 1.4 speaks of deliverance from the present evil age, and 1 Cor. 15 understands salvation in terms of resurrection. These are but variations on a theme, as are the two statements in Gal. 4.5. Since the second statement will be treated more fully in the discussion of believer sonship, only a few words need be said about it here.

The statement in vs. 5b concerns the reception of adoptive sonship by Christians. It takes the form of a  $\iota\upsilon\alpha$  clause which is logically dependent upon the preceding  $\iota\upsilon\alpha$  clause of vs. 5a, that is, adoption presupposes redemption. In a sense redemption is offered as a possibility to all men, whereas the adoption belongs only to those who have accepted the redemptive death of Christ as being efficacious for themselves. At the same time, vs. 5b expresses a second soteriological goal of God in sending his Son (vs. 4bc).

The first  $\iota\upsilon\alpha$  clause of Gal. 4.5 specifies that salvation consists in redemption by Christ for those under the law. Paul's choice of this description for salvation in vs. 5 is conditioned by the nature of the problem in Galatia and the argument of the letter. He may in fact have derived the idea from what was perhaps a more common theme in his thought, redemption ( $\alpha\pi\omicron\lambda\upsilon\tau\rho\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ) conceived as forgiveness of sin (cf. Rom. 3.24, 1 Cor. 1.30; Col. 1.14, and cf.

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<sup>1</sup>Blank, Paulus, p. 270 (emphasis his).



2.13).<sup>1</sup> The verb ἑξαγοράζειν and especially its aorist form in Gal. 4.5 and 3.13 forcefully emphasizes the unique redemptive act of Christ and perhaps also the idea of an actual payment in order to redeem (cf. 1 Cor. 6.20; 7.23).<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Paul did not intend a straightforward objectivisation of ἑξαγοράζειν in Gal. 4.5 and 3.13 which would make the two verses refer to a "commercial transaction between Christ and God"; rather, he "sees the process as something which took place towards us and in our favour, not as something which took place towards God and in his favour."<sup>3</sup>

The object of Christ's redemptive act in Gal. 4.5, τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον, creates a certain amount of difficulty. The expected recipients should have been τοὺς ὑπὸ τῇ στοιχειᾷ τοῦ κόσμου based on Gal. 4.3. The statement as it stands would seem to be limited to those under the Jewish law, but the context demands an application to both Jews and Gentiles.<sup>4</sup> Two solutions seem possible from the letter itself. In Gal. 3.10 Paul quotes Dt. 27.26, a verse which declares that all who do not perform everything written in the book of the law are accursed. Because Gal. 4.5a, in keeping with Gal. 3.13, might mean "Christ redeemed those under the curse of the law," Paul may have included Gentiles under the imprecation of Dt. 27.26 (Gal. 3.10) since they obviously failed to do everything written in the law, a concept which could include the whole Old Testament. Such a thought may seem unfair by modern standards, but according to Rom. 3.19, the law effectively leaves all men accountable for their sins before God, and in that sense under the curse pronounced by the law

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<sup>1</sup>F. Büchsel, "ἀπολύτρωσις," TDNT 4, p. 353 maintains that both Rom. 3.24 and 1 Cor. 1.30 "implicitly" equate redemption with forgiveness of sins, just as Col. 1.14 and Eph. 1.7 do so explicitly.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 355. L. Morris, The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (1960<sup>2</sup>), p. 58 maintains, "When the New Testament speaks of redemption . . . it means that Christ has paid the price of our redemption."

<sup>3</sup>F. Büchsel, "ἀγοράζειν, ἑξαγοράζειν," TDNT 1, p. 127. Gal. 3.13 may well imply a substitutionary view of atonement. Cf. Morris, Apostolic Preaching, pp. 52-56, 59. It should be said that the idea of redemption from the curse of the law is very closely associated with justification in the thought of Gal. 3 and 4.

<sup>4</sup>Schlier, Galater, p. 197 contends regarding vs. 5b: "In dem ἡμεῖς schliesst sich Paulus wiederum mit den Angeredeten bzw. mit allen Christen aus Juden und Heiden zusammen. Auch durch dieses ἡμεῖς—im parallelen ἵνα-Satz!—sind wir genötigt, die οἱ ὑπὸ νόμον auf die gesamte Menschheit zu beziehen." Cf. J.W. Drane, Paul: Libertine or Legalist? A Study in the Theology of the Major Pauline Epistles (1975), p. 37.

against transgressions.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, and more simply, Paul may have conceived of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου of Gal. 4.3 as a type of enslaving law similar to Jewish law. As Mussner observes with respect to Gal. 4.5: ""Wenn der Apostel jetzt dafür ὑπὸ νόμον schreibt, zeigt das schon an, dass für ihn ein inner Zusammenhang der Gesetzesherrschaft mit der Herrschaft der 'Weltelemente' besteht.""<sup>2</sup> Gal. 4.9 perhaps confirms this since Paul describes the threatened apostasy of the Galatians to some type of law-Gospel complex as a return to enslavement by the weak and beggarly stoicheia. Whichever solution is correct, Paul meant to include both Jews and Gentiles in the phrase, "those under the law." It is also true to say that those under the law were, in one way or another, in bondage to it (cf. Gal. 3.23; 4.3; 5.1).

Vs. 5a leaves one crucial fact unstated but clearly understood: eschatological redemption demanded the death of the Son of God. Paul did not need to state it here expressly because he had already made it clear in Gal. 3.13: Christ redeemed those under the curse of the law by his death on the cross, becoming a curse on man's behalf (ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν . . . γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα). When the ground thought of vs. 5a, Christ's death to redeem those under the law and its bondage, is connected with the thought content of vs. 4bc, an important theological reflection comes into view. Paul believed that the Son, sent by God, represented God precisely in his redemptive death. The idea of vss. 4 and 5 may thus be paraphrased in the following way: "When the eschatological fullness of time came, God sent his pre-existent Son, born as a human being, born under the demands of the law, in order to represent him in redeeming, through his death, those

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<sup>1</sup>Burton, Galatians, p. 219 attempts to bring Gentiles under the law and its curse in another way. He notes that the Gentiles possess a law of divine origin within themselves according to Rom. 2.14-15. He then maintains, "though the phrase ὑπὸ νόμον is usually employed with reference to the legalism that grew up on Jewish soil, yet that Paul was aware that the law whose work is written in the heart might also be externalised and made legalistic is intrinsically probable and is confirmed by 1 Cor. 9.20, where τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον, standing as a middle term between τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις and τοῖς ἀνόμοις, seems to designate those, whether Jew or Gentile, who were living under a system of legalism." This exegesis of 1 Cor. 9.20 is forced, and Rom. 2.14-15 does not appear to refer to a type of law which is prone to legalistic interpretation; therefore Burton's explanation fails to carry conviction.

<sup>2</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 270.



under the bondage of law, in order that they (those under the law) might receive adoption to divine sonship." The conception of Christ as the representative of God, especially with reference to his death, corresponds to the idea found elsewhere in Paul that Christ was the personal agent of God or instrument of God in bringing salvation. This agency conception occurs in several theologically pregnant passages indicating that it played a vital role in the theological reflection of the apostle Paul. A brief examination of Rom. 3.24-26 and 2 Cor. 5.18-21 will suffice in showing this.

a. Rom. 3.24-26 and 2 Cor. 5.18-21

Rom. 3.24-26 constitutes a concise statement of the divine solution to the problem of man's sin and alienation from God. The solution offered by Rom. 3.24-26 culminates a line of discussion and reasoning begun at Rom. 1.18. The details of this discussion need not concern us here; the point is that Rom. 3.24-26 occur in a theologically pregnant context in which Paul develops the theme of humanity's universal guilt and need for redemption (justification) before the holy and righteous God (cf. 3.20-23). According to 3.24,<sup>1</sup> justification is a gift of God's grace brought about by the redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) which is in (or through) Christ Jesus, that is, in his death. Although God's saving grace is closely joined with the redemption found in Christ in vs. 24, vss. 25-26 make Christ's divine representative function clear: "God put him (sc. Christ) forward as a ἱλαστήριον in his blood, to be appropriated by faith, for a demonstration of his own (sc. God's) righteousness . . . that he might be righteous and the justifier of the man who believes in Jesus

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<sup>1</sup>The relation of vs. 24 to what precedes is difficult. The δικαιούμενοι of vs. 24 is dependent on the πάντες of vs. 23 which in turn is connected with the statement in vs. 22b "there is no distinction." The content of vs. 24, however, is better understood in relationship to vss. 21 and 22a, with 22b and 23 understood as a parenthesis (the view of Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 85), or in relationship to vss. 21 and 22ab, with vs. 23 understood as a parenthesis (the view of Michel, Römer, p. 149). Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 205 proposes that the grammatical structure be accepted as it stands, making vs. 24 dependent upon the πάντες of vs. 23 and understanding it as an explanatory expansion of vs. 22b. Whatever explanation of the relationship between vss. 22, 23 and 24 is adopted, Professor Cranfield is correct in maintaining that "Paul has . . . made a substantial addition to the treatment of the main theme of the paragraph" in vs. 24.

(ὅν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ (τῆς) πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ . . . εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ.) Whether ἱλαστήριον refers to expiation or propitiation in vs. 25, vss. 25-26 plainly mean that God used Christ and his death to accomplish his own saving purposes; Christ was God's agent or representative for proving his own righteousness and in providing for the justification of the ungodly by virtue of his (sc. Christ's) redemptive death. Even if Rom. 3.24-26 (or some part of it), is a pre-Pauline or "nebenpaulinisch" formulation,<sup>1</sup> its position in the thought progression of Rom. 1.18-4.25 is sufficient to demonstrate the importance of the representative or agency conception for Paul.<sup>2</sup>

2 Cor. 5.18-21 concludes a paragraph (vss. 11-21) which Professor Barrett calls, "one of the most pregnant, difficult, and important in the whole of the Pauline literature."<sup>3</sup> Paul wrestles with the nature of his own ministry, the nature of his message of reconciliation and salvation in Christ, and the problem of how he, his message, and God's salvation in Christ, relate to the Corinthians. Having already expressed his belief that Christ died on behalf of everyone (vss. 14-15), Paul maintains in vs. 18, through a subordinate participial construction, that God was the one who reconciled mankind to himself through Christ, that is, through his death (τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ χριστοῦ). The importance of this idea

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<sup>1</sup>This view is held by Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 46; Käsemann, Römer, p. 88; and C.H. Talbert, "A Non-Pauline Fragment at Romans 3.24-26," JBL 85 (1966), pp. 287-296, among others. Against this view see the criticisms of Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 107, 109. Michel, Römer, p. 154 is probably closer to the truth when he observes "Paulus Begriffe wie 'Erlösung' (ἀπολύτρωσις) und 'Sühnopfer' (ἱλαστήριον) aus einer älteren Tradition übernommen hat." He may also be right in relating this tradition to the "Abendmahl" tradition.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. J.D.G. Dunn, "Paul's Understanding of the Death of Jesus," Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology (1974), p. 131. Although no commentator known to us denies that Rom. 3.24-26 refers to the representative function of Christ in his death, and many make explicit reference to the fact that God accomplishes salvation through the agency of Christ (cf. e.g. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 80; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 208, 214, 217; C.H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans (1932), p. 54 and Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 104-105, the idea has not received adequate attention in relation to Paul's total theology.

<sup>3</sup>Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 163.



causes Paul to reiterate it and expand its implications in vs. 19: "God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself (θεὸς ἦν ἐν χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ)."<sup>1</sup> The διὰ χριστοῦ of vs. 18 and the parallel expression ἐν χριστῷ of vs. 19 indicate that Christ was God's agent in reconciling both mankind and the cosmos to himself.<sup>2</sup> This is highly important for Paul because of his conviction that both the initiative and the means of salvation originate with God (cf. Rom. 3.21-26; 5.8-10; 1 Cor. 1.9, 30; Gal. 1.4; Col. 1.13), a fact confirmed by vs. 21. In vs. 21 Paul concludes by attempting to formulate how God effected reconciliation in Christ and his death. He says: "He (God) made him who did not know sin to be sin (in the sense of the object of God's wrath) on our behalf (cf. Rom. 8.3-4), in order that we might become the righteousness of God in him." The important point, at least in the context of this discussion, is that in Paul's mind God had done something to Christ, made him to be the principal object of divine wrath, which could not have been done to anyone else. In this way Christ not only became a representative for man, but he also functioned as the agent of God and the means for providing salvation, here depicted as righteousness.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>On the possible translations of vs. 19 see *ibid.*, p. 177 and J.-F. Collange, *Énigmes de la Deuxième Épître de Paul aux Corinthiens* (1972), p. 270. Collange, following E. Käsemann, argues that 2 Cor. 5.19 is a citation of an existing formula. The evidence for this, however, is not altogether convincing, but even if the contents of vs. 19 were from an already existing formula, the thoughts are genuinely Pauline.

<sup>2</sup>Dunn, "Death of Jesus," p. 140, with discernment observes: "we do no justice to Paul's view of Jesus' death unless we emphasize . . . that in his death Jesus also 'substituted' for God in the face of man's sin—'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' (2 Cor. 5.19)."

<sup>3</sup>M.D. Hooker, in a stimulating essay entitled "Interchange in Christ," *JTS* 22 (1971), pp. 349-361, develops the thesis that Paul understood Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection in terms of an interchange: "Christ became what we are, in order that (in him) we might become what he is." Beginning with 2 Cor. 5.21 and Gal. 3.13, she works out the interchange idea, examining a number of other passages along the way including Gal. 4.4-6. In relation to 2 Cor. 5.21 she explains: "In some unfathomable way Christ is identified with what is opposed to God, in order that man should be reconciled to him. Once again we notice that a step in the argument has been assumed: for it is 'in him' that we become the righteousness of God. Once again the evil force has been annulled and transformed into the opposing, positive force, and the basis of this reversal is the death and resurrection of Christ." (p. 353). Dr. Hooker's treatment of 2 Cor.

b. Sonship: the Basis of Representation

Rom. 3.24-26 and 2 Cor. 5.18-21 poignantly attest to Paul's belief that Christ was God's agent or representative, that God worked through Christ, especially his death, in accomplishing his saving purposes. But these passages implicitly pose a crucial theological question: What was the theological basis for the apostle's assumption that God had acted through or in Christ? Gal. 4.4-5 offers the answer to this problem. Christ was God's pre-existent Son, sent into the world, sent into human existence as God's representative, for the purpose of instituting salvation. That he could do this, that God could act through him as through no other, was the result of Christ's obedient Sonship relationship,<sup>1</sup> a relationship which extended backwards to the time before his human existence (cf. Phil. 2.6-7).

It is no accident that a number of commentators resort to the language of Sonship in discussing Rom. 3.24-26.<sup>2</sup> The reason is transparent. God's saving activity, activity in which he is directly involved in order to demonstrate his own righteousness, demands the closest possible connection between the agent of his activity, Christ, and himself.

Other Sonship passages which remain to be discussed bear out the correctness of understanding Christ's divine Sonship as the presupposition for his role as the representative or agent of God in

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5.21, and the study as a whole, lacks sufficient attention to the fact that Christ is not only man's representative but also God's. If Christ is man's representative, particularly in his death, it only has meaning in so far as he is first God's representative. Cf. Dunn, "Death of Jesus," pp. 140-141. Dunn also correctly insists that for Paul "representation" of man by Christ in his death includes the idea of substitution, an idea that Dr. Hooker seems to deny (p. 358). The German Stellvertreter (used by Bultmann, Zweite Korinther, p. 167 in relationship to the ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν of 2 Cor. 5.21), is perhaps a good word for what Dunn has in mind.

<sup>1</sup>On the obedience of Christ in Paul's theology see R.N. Longenecker, "The Obedience of Christ in the Theology of the Early Church," Reconciliation and Hope: Essays on Atonement and Eschatology (1974), pp. 143-148.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 80 (also 2 Corinthians, p. 175); Professor Cranfield, Romans I, pp. 208, 214, and 217; Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 104-105; and A. Schlatter, Gerechtigkeit, pp. 144-145, 149.



bringing eschatological salvation.<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5.8-10; 8.3-4, 32; Phil. 2.6-11; Col. 1.13ff. all connect the idea of Christ's Sonship with God's saving purposes and activities. For example, in Rom. 5.8-10 Paul maintains that God showed his love for us through Christ's death on our behalf, while we were still sinners. By implication Christ stands with God over against sinful humanity so that he may be a manifestation of God's love. Paul then re-formulates the thought of vs. 8 in vs. 10. He explains that it was while we were enemies of God that we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son. The Son, who possesses a unique relationship to God, is expressly the agent of reconciliation which has its source in God (cf. 2 Cor. 5.18-19).

Without the Sonship of Christ, which has its roots in the sending of the Son as presented most clearly in Gal. 4.4-5 (cf. Rom. 8.3-4), it is difficult if not impossible to account for how God could effect his eschatological salvation through the death of the man Jesus. Paul's belief that the earthly Jesus was fully man, but at the same time more than man, that is, Son of God, provides a crucial touchstone for his entire theology. In other words, Gal. 4.4-5, though specifically formulated in the context of the argument of Galatians, attest that one of the most fundamental elements in Paul's theology was his belief in the unique divine Sonship of Jesus Christ.

#### B. "God Sent his Own Son": Rom. 8.3-4

The second sending passage which must be examined is Rom. 8.3-4. Like Gal. 4.4-5, it concerns God's sending of his Son into human existence to bring about his saving purposes in history. At the same time, the context in which the sending of the Son is placed and the presentation of God's saving act in Rom. 8.3-4 are quite different from Gal. 4.4-5. In Rom. 8.3-4 Paul does not say that God sent his Son in order to redeem men and in order that they might receive adoption. Instead he argues that God condemned sin in the flesh of his Son, in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk according to the Spirit. The context of Rom. 8.3-4

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<sup>1</sup>Kümmel, Theology, p. 161 maintains, "That God the Father himself is working salvation in that which has happened and will happen through Jesus Christ is what Paul wants to emphasize when he speaks of the Son of God." Cf. Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 68-78 and Cullmann, Christology, pp. 292-294.

deals with the power of sin in relationship to the believer, whereas the context of Gal. 4.4-5 treats the enslaving power of the law. These differences between Rom. 8.3-4 and Gal. 4.4-5, as well as the great dissimilarity in the sending statements contained in the two passages, are important to bear in mind from the outset. They point to the conclusion that the sending of the Son was of fundamental theological significance to Paul in understanding God's eschatological salvation which had been brought about in Christ, regardless of the perspective from which it was being considered.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. The Context of Rom. 8.3-4

In examining Rom. 8.3-4 with regard to the divine Sonship of Christ, it is first necessary to consider its context before proceeding to a detailed analysis of its actual content. Rom. 8.3-4 is contained within a paragraph beginning in 8.1 and running through 8.11. The relationship of this paragraph to what precedes in chapter 7 is a much debated problem. The difficulty primarily arises from interpreting Rom. 7.14-25 in terms of the "unredeemed man," rather than as the reflection of the inner struggle of the Christian with sin. The well-known debate on this problem is both too complex and too tangential to our present interests to be discussed here. It may be mentioned in passing, however, that the great difficulty many, though not all, who hold to the pre-Christian character of the experience in Rom. 7.14-24 find with the arrangement and content of Rom. 7.23-8.2 should serve as a caveat against their interpretation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>On the supposed pre-Pauline formula or thought schema of Rom. 8.3-4 see supra, pp. 113ff. The emphasis on the differences between Rom. 8.3-4 and its context and Gal. 4.4-5 and its context is not intended to deny that a number of important similarities exist in the thought of the two passages. These include the fact that in both, Paul is concerned with God's act in his Son to overcome enslaving powers which are inherently related to one another and the fact that Paul passes from the Son of God sent into the world to the sons of God who share in God's eschatological salvation (cf. Rom. 8.14ff. with Gal. 4.5b-7).

<sup>2</sup>For an overview of the various ways in which Rom. 7.23-8.2 are modified by those holding to the pre-Christian character of the experience in 7.7ff., see Paulsen, Römer 8, pp. 23-31. Paulsen outlines the main solutions presented by those wishing to relate 7.14ff. to the non-Christian as follows: "1. Das Rätsel von 7.25b löst sich erst dann, wenn der Versteil umgestellt und hinter V.23 eingeordnet wird; er zieht dann die Summe aus dem Vorangegangenen. 2. In die gleiche Richtung zielt jene Erklärung, die V. 25b. als Interpolation ansieht und diesen Teil des Verses als sekundär streicht. 3.



This is especially the case since those seeing in 7.14-25 the morally and spiritually ambiguous experience of the Christian believer have little or no trouble explaining the text of Rom. 7.23-8.2 as it stands,<sup>1</sup> a text for which there is no contrary textual evidence concerning the points in dispute.

The thought connection of Rom. 8.1ff. is with 7.1-6 rather than 7.13-25.<sup>2</sup> The material separating 7.6 from 8.1ff. forms an excursus of sorts, though a highly relevant one. Thus when Paul asserts in Rom. 8.1 that there is now no condemnation in Christ, it is a consequence (ἀρα) of his belief that the Christian has been freed from the law, having died to that which formerly bound him to the power of sin, so that he might now serve in the newness of the Spirit and not the oldness of the letter of the law (7.6 cf. 8.2). The assertion of Rom. 8.1 which is a consequence of 7.1-6, especially vs. 6, also serves to assure the believer against the doubts engendered by the moral ambiguity of his Christian experience as set forth in 7.14ff. Rom. 8.2 expresses the reason (γάρ) for the confident claim of vs. 1. At the same time, 8.2 picks up the thought of 7.6b, introducing the Spirit into the discussion of chapter 8. This theme, in turn, comes to dominate much of the thought of chapter 8. The reason the believer does not experience condemnation in Christ is because the law of the Spirit of life has freed him in Christ from the law of sin and death, at the time he received the Spirit (note the aorist tense of ἡλευθέρωσεν). The principle (νόμος) of the

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8,1 wird entweder direkt an 7,25a angeschlossen oder bekommt seine Stellung hinter 8,2 und vor 8,3. 4. 8,1 ist genauso wie 7,25b als sekundär Interpolation anzusehen." No textual evidence exists to support any of the possible alterations in the text of Rom. 7.23-8.2 suggested by those who find this passage an embarrassment to their views on the pre-Christian experience of Rom. 7.14ff. Besides the flow of thought in 7.23ff. being against a primary pre-Christian interpretation of 7.14ff., the change from the past tenses of 7.7-13 to the present tenses in vss. 14ff. argues strongly against this view. Both the unbelieving Jew and the conscientious unbelieving Gentile might experience similar struggles in themselves, but 7.14ff. is, in our view, mainly concerned with the experience of the Christian.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 150ff.; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 364ff., and J.D.G. Dunn, "Rom. 7,14-25 in the Theology of Paul," TZ 31 (1975), pp. 257-273.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 154; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 372-373, and Leenhardt, Romans, p. 200.

Spirit of life, operative only in Christ Jesus, removes the believer from the old universally applicable principle ( $\nu\acute{o}\mu\omicron\varsigma$ ) of sin and its concomitant, death.

The  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$  of vs. 3 indicates that it, and vs. 4, a purpose clause related to the main clause in vs. 3, are the next links in the chain of thought. Vss. 3-4 provide the reason why the Spirit of life frees the person in Christ from the law of sin and death and therefore why there is no condemnation for those in Christ. In this way vss. 3-4 play an important role in the discussion because they give the theological and Christological basis for the soteriological significance of both vss. 1 and 2. Salvation is never gnostic in Paul; it is always grounded in the acts of God in history. God accomplished his eschatological salvation through his Son.

The chain connection continues in vs. 5 which is joined to what precedes by  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$  as well. Vs. 5 seeks to amplify the meaning of the phrase "those not walking according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" in vs. 4. To a large extent the whole of vss. 5-11 expand on the antithesis of Spirit versus flesh in human existence, and therefore the  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$  of vs. 5 connects the whole of vss. 5-11 with vs. 4.<sup>1</sup> Vs. 6, connected to vs. 5 by yet another  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ , depicts the respective ends towards which human activity controlled by the flesh and by the Spirit lead. Vss. 7-8 present the alienation from God characteristic of fleshly existence, while vss. 9-11 treat the life coming through the indwelling of the Spirit in the believer.

The way in which vss. 3-4 ground vss. 1 and 2 and then provide the theological and Christological presupposition for the discussion in vss. 5-11 indicate their centrality in the section. R. Jewett calls them the "core" of the section 8.1-11 and Von der Osten-Sacken describes them as the "christologische Basis der paulinischen Ausführungen" in 8.1-13.<sup>2</sup> With this in mind we may begin the exegesis

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<sup>1</sup>Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 385. See also Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 151ff. who points out that in vss. 7f. "ist einmal die in V. 4 enthaltene Behauptung nachgewiesen, dass unter den sarkisch Lebenden die Rechtsforderung des Gesetzes nicht erfüllt wird," that vs. 3a and 7f. are related, and that vss. 9-11 have affinities with vss. 2 and 3f.

<sup>2</sup>Jewett, Anthropological Terms, p. 148 and Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 145. Cf. U. Luz, "Zum Aufbau vom Röm 1-8," TZ 25 (1969), p. 177.



of vss. 3-4.

## 2. The Purpose of the Sending of the Son

The initial words of vs. 3, τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, and the connected subordinate clause, ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκός, create difficulties for the interpreter. Vs. 3ab may represent an anacoluthon which must be supplemented in order to make sense; or it may form an absolute; or it may be appositional to the phrase κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί.<sup>1</sup> This latter explanation has the advantage of making the clearest sense of the statement as it is and is therefore to be preferred. The point Paul wishes to make and to emphasize by the initial position of the accusative of apposition is that the law could not condemn sin as a power because it was weak through the flesh. The law was certainly capable of condemning individual transgressions; but it was impossible for it to condemn and thereby overthrow the power of sin in the flesh because of the moral turpitude of human existence.<sup>2</sup> The saving purpose which was impossible for the law to bring about, God himself accomplished by sending his Son to condemn sin in his flesh.

The unsupplemented main clause of vs. 3 is, "God condemned sin (κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν)." The verb κατακρίνειν implies both the pronouncement of condemnation and the execution of the condemnation,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Those who appear to favor an anacoluthon include Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 155; Michel, Römer, p. 250; and Käsemann, Römer, p. 205. Schlatter, Gerechtigkeit, p. 255 and Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 236, 240 opt for vs. 3ab being an absolute. Among those seeing an accusative in apposition are Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 378; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 191; and Blass-Debrunner-Funk, sect. 480, n. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Blank, Paulus, p. 288 who explains, "Das ἀδύνατον bezeichnet seine spezifische Schwäche, näherhin seine Heils-Schwäche die in diesem Zusammenhang auf das Fleisch, die σὰρξ zurückgeführt wird. In dem von der Sündenmacht, der ἁμαρτία, beherrschten Bereich des Fleisches ist das Gesetz zur Ohnmacht verdammt."

<sup>3</sup>F. Büchsel, "κρίνω, κτλ.," TDNT 3, p. 951. Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 382-383. Büchsel maintains, "One cannot seek a single historical fact in which the condemnation is pronounced and executed. Paul is obviously thinking of the totality of what God has done, and does, through His Son. He has in mind the whole movement from the incarnation to the impartation of the Spirit to believers, v. 4. The obedience of the Son to the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8) is obviously part of this κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. But in R. Paul's concern is with the whole of God's saving action in the Son, not with details" (pp. 951f.).

though the carrying out of the sentence against sin continues through the work of the Spirit in believers. Two factors external to vss. 3-4 condition the choice of κατακρίνειν at this point for describing God's saving act in his Son. The more immediate factor is the appearance of the noun κατάκριμα in vs. 1.<sup>1</sup> The man in Christ is not subject to condemnation and doom arising from the operation of sin and death (vss. 1 and 2) because God himself has condemned sin. The means of this divine proscription are treated in the supplements to vs. 3, which shall be discussed shortly. Since 8.1 looks back to Rom. 5.16, 18 where Paul first introduces the idea of κατάκριμα, of necessity, so does 8.3.

In 5.16 Paul maintains that the judgment against the single transgression (παράπτωμα) of Adam led to condemnation and punishment. That condemnation and punishment was death (cf. 5.17). In contrast to the punishment following one man's transgression, the gift of God, following innumerable transgressions, led to acquittal or justification (δικαίωμα).<sup>2</sup> Vs. 18 draws the inference from vss. 16-17 that one man's transgression, that of Adam, resulted in all men coming under the judgment leveled against his transgression. On the other hand, the righteous deed of one man, Christ, produced the justification leading to life for all men. In Rom. 8.3 God's proscription of sin as a principle affecting the whole of humanity (cf. 5.13) represents the reversal of the condemnation resulting from Adam's transgression: the principle leading to man's condemnation has itself been subject to the divine sentence of abolition. In this way the main clause of 8.3 supports 8.1-2 by explaining what has happened to the power of sin for those in Christ; it has been proscribed and destroyed.

The saving act of God, conceived in Rom. 8.3 as the condemning

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<sup>1</sup>Arndt-Gingrich, "κατάκριμα," p. 413 hesitantly suggests that κατάκριμα does not refer to condemnation but to the punishment following sentence. Rom. 5.16 may offer support for this view since κατάκριμα is juxtaposed with κρίμα in a context where κρίμα implies condemnation. Nevertheless, κατάκριμα probably includes the idea of condemnation as well as the rendering of the punishment prescribed in the pronouncement of condemnation. Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 287, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup>δικαίωμα was apparently chosen to correspond with the other words in the context ending in μα, but its meaning is equivalent to δικαίωσις. See Arndt-Gingrich, "δικαίωμα," p. 197.



of the power of sin to destruction, is from Paul's perspective only possible in Christ Jesus, the Son of God. For this reason the words "ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας" are essential to the main clause of Rom. 8.3. God's condemnation of sin took place within the confines of human existence in the person of his Son whom he had sent to share the vicissitudes of mortal life. Unlike Gal. 4.4 where Paul employs the verb ἐξαποστέλλειν, he utilizes the verb πέμπειν to assert that God sent his Son into human existence. Rengstorf has suggested that the choice of πέμπειν in Rom. 8.3 is intended to place the main emphasis on the sending itself rather than the commissioning of the one sent.<sup>1</sup> Kramer is probably right, however, in objecting that this is a "forced distinction."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, in Rom. 8.3-4 Paul is primarily concerned with the divine act in Christ, not with Christ's actual activity nor with the volitional aspect of his human existence. In Gal. 4.4-5, as we have seen, Paul explains the saving significance of the sending of Christ in personal terms through reference to his redeeming those under the law in order that they might receive adoption. Similarly in Rom. 8.3-4 Paul expresses the saving purpose of Christ's sending in personal terms. Vs. 4 states the purpose of the sending of God's Son in terms of the "requirement of the law being fulfilled in us (ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν)." The agency idea, which views the Son as the personal agent of God in instituting salvation, is clearly implied.<sup>3</sup> The emphatic ἑαυτοῦ joined to the word υἱόν underscores the close personal identity of God with his Son whom he sent into the world in order to carry out his saving work through him. Here, as in Gal. 4.4, the sending statement presupposes the pre-existence of the Son and the existence of his Sonship relation with God before his entry into the world as a man. In turn, this presupposition becomes the one necessary for assuming that God has truly effected eschatological salvation through the man Jesus.

### 3. The Problematic "in the Likeness of Sinful Flesh"

The most difficult expression to interpret in the sending

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<sup>1</sup>Rengstorf, "Ἀποστέλλω," p. 404.

<sup>2</sup>Kramer, Christ, p. 115, n. 389.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 155-156.

statement is the phrase ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας. These words, to some extent, parallel the γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον of Gal. 4.4 and therefore implicitly relate to the idea of Christ's incarnation. They remain problematic, however, because it is unclear how they should be understood in their current context. The great danger for the exegete attempting to interpret the phrase "in the likeness of sinful flesh" is that he approach them with a framework supplied by later historical problems and dogmatic formulations. That Paul espoused a docetic Christology is all but out of the question. Any number of texts reveal that Paul was no docetist (cf. Rom. 1.3; 3.25; 5.10; Gal. 1.19; 4.4).<sup>1</sup> Just as Paul was not a docetist, neither does he seem to have had a personal problem with Christ's divine origin over against his humanity.<sup>2</sup> The fact that

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<sup>1</sup> Jewett, Anthropological Terms, p. 150, with some justification, protests, "The discussion of Rom. 8:3 has too long been obscured with the concern to place Paul on the correct side of the docetic struggle which arose after his time." Jewett's own understanding of Rom. 8.3, however, is equally tendentious. He proposes "to interpret Rom. 8:3-4 in light of 1:3-4, and suggest[s] that the correction of Hellenistic Christology which Paul initiated with the insertion of the word "holiness" in 1:4 may well be carried out in 8:3." He maintains that the Hellenistic community "preceded Paul in the connection of σὰρξ with Christological formulation, and that Paul's summary in 8:3 is a correction of Hellenistic theology." What Jewett seems to believe, though he is not very explicit, is that Paul took up a Christological formulation which was essentially Hellenistic and Gnostic. This formulation maintained that Christ came in the flesh to condemn the flesh, thus viewing man's dilemma as "rooted in materiality." Paul radically altered this Gnosticizing formula by maintaining that Christ came in sinful flesh to condemn sin, thereby rooting man's dilemma "in his conflict with God's righteousness" (pp. 151-152, cf. 138). Apart from his total failure to prove that Paul has actually modified a "nebenpaulinisch" formula in Rom. 8.3, he completely ignores the fact that Rom. 8.1ff. is closely connected with 5.12ff. where the problem of sin as a power controlling human existence is already introduced. His whole thesis, both with regard to Rom. 8.3 and 1.3-4, is built on the presupposition of Gnosticism which he reads into hypothetical formulations. He then claims that Paul has corrected the Gnostic tendencies in the formula which has been preserved. Such a methodology can allow its user to prove virtually anything that he wishes, and for this reason must be rejected as a tool for historical research. Moreover, Jewett does not seem to take account of the fact that in Hellenistic thought it is not σὰρξ which is used to express the material side of existence but ὕλη. On this point see Davies, Paul, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 381-382 urges that the word ὁμοίωμα has the sense of 'likeness' and "understand[s] Paul's thought to be that the Son of God assumed the selfsame fallen human nature that is ours, but that in His case that fallen nature was never the whole of Him—He never ceased to be the eternal Son of God." Cf. J. Schneider, "ὅμοιος κτλ.," TDNT 5, pp. 195-196.



Paul believed Christ to be the unique and pre-existent Son of God (cf. 1 Cor. 15.28; Gal. 4.4; Phil. 2.6ff.; Col. 1.13ff.) indicates the impossibility of him having entertained the idea that Christ was merely a man during his earthly life. The assertion "God sent his Son" already precludes this possibility in Rom. 8.3 for Paul. On the other hand, if the Roman Christians thought that Christ were merely a man (and there is no evidence to suggest they did), then Paul could hardly have expected his ambiguous ὁμοίωμα to correct their error.

The solution to the meaning of ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας must, in the first instance, be sought within its context in the letter to the Romans. Paul presumably intended his readers to be able to understand the statement within its context, or he was guilty of obscurantism. In contrast to the Christians at Rome, we have the further advantage of a significant collection of his letters which we may consult should the material in Romans prove inadequate for solving the problem or should we wish for information to supplement our understanding of what Paul says in Romans. The beginning point must not be the problematic term ὁμοίωμα but the words σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας.

The term σὰρξ in Paul does not always connote the moral degeneracy of human existence.<sup>1</sup> Previously in the examination of Rom. 1.3-4 grounds were given for believing that σὰρξ may denote nothing more than human existence with no pejorative connotation. In the case of Rom. 1.3 it was argued, with special reference to Rom. 9.5 that Christ's descent from the seed of David, κατὰ σάρκα, meant no more than that he was a physical descendant of David. Several other passages convey a neutral meaning for σὰρξ. In Rom. 2.28 "flesh" indicates the physical place in which circumcision is performed, but without passing a moral judgment. In 4.1 κατὰ σάρκα simply expresses the physical descent of Jews from Abraham. In another passage,

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<sup>1</sup>For a more extensive treatment of the idea of "flesh" in Paul which stresses that "flesh" is often viewed as morally neutral see Schweitzer, "σὰρξ," pp. 125-136. Cf. also Bultmann, Theology 1, pp. 232-246; Kümmel, Theology, pp. 174-178 and Davies, Paul, pp. 17-35. Davies (p. 19) claims of the ninety-one instances of flesh in Paul (he includes σαρκικός and σάρκινος), that fifty-six are used "in a purely material sense either of physical structure, or kinship, or sphere of present existence, or fleshly weakness; in thirty-five cases it has an ethical significance."

Rom. 11.14, Paul desires to make jealous "μου τὴν σάρκα." Once again, "flesh" means no more than those who share the same physical descent. Outside Romans a number of Pauline texts employ the word "flesh" in a morally neutral sense. For example, 1 Cor. 1.26 speaks of "not many wise according to the flesh." κατὰ σάρκα signifies little more than "in human terms" in this text. In both 1 Cor. 7.28 and 2 Cor. 12.7 σάρξ simply designates the place where tribulation and suffering occur, and in Phil. 1.22, 24 σάρξ refers to Paul's physical existence without moral overtones. One final passage particularly worthy of mention is Col. 1.22 where Paul avers that Christ "ἀποκατήλλαξεν [ὑμᾶς] ἐν τῷ σώματι τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου." The flesh in this verse refers to Christ's physical being as the place in which Christ suffered in order to bring reconciliation between God and man. Paul attributes neither sinfulness nor any other negative connotation to Christ's flesh in this passage. In light of the passages mentioned here, and many others which might have been mentioned (cf. 1 Cor. 6.16; 15.39; 2 Cor. 4.11; 7.5; Gal. 4.13, 14; Phil. 1.22, 24; Col. 1.24; 2.1, 5; 3.22), the conclusion of Schweizer that "the flesh is not a sphere which is to be differentiated from other earthly things and which is intrinsically bad or especially dangerous" seems justified.<sup>1</sup>

The flesh, morally neutral in itself, under the corrupting influence of sin, however, degenerates into absolute hostility towards God and his righteousness. The word σάρξ only takes on this connotation, by virtue of the contexts in which it is placed. The morally corrupt character of human flesh is nowhere so much at the center of Paul's discussions as in Rom. 7-8. In Rom. 7.5 the apostle asserts, "When we were in the flesh, the passions of sin caused by the law worked in our bodies with the result that we brought forth fruits unto death."<sup>2</sup> The flesh in this verse relates to the pre-Christian existence dominated by sin, for sin operates in the sphere of man's physical

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<sup>1</sup>Schweizer, "σάρξ," p. 135. Cf. Davies, Paul, p. 19 and V.P. Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul (1968), p. 117, who maintains, "In and of itself the flesh is not sinful, as numerous 'neutral' references in the Pauline letters clearly show."

<sup>2</sup>In Gal. 5.19-21 Paul presents a standard list of the works of the flesh. Though he does not set them out as works of the flesh, the sins expounded in Rom. 1.18-32 closely correspond to those listed more briefly in Gal. 5.19-21.



being, including his mind and will, which in Paul's day were thought to be centered in the heart. The flesh, through sin, becomes incapable of obedience to God. The awareness of the moral turpitude of human existence in the face of a righteous God compels Paul to recognize in vs. 18 that no good dwells in his flesh because, as he goes on to say in vs. 25, with his flesh he inevitably serves the law of sin. If what Paul says in vss. 18 and 25 is true of the Christian, it is even truer of the non-Christian. Beginning with 8.4 Paul contrasts human existence "κατὰ σάρκα" and "κατὰ πνεῦμα." The Christian no longer lives exclusively according to the flesh setting his mind on the flesh (vs. 5) because the strivings of the flesh are at enmity with God, being incapable of subjection to the law of God, and those in the flesh cannot please God (vss. 7-8). The fleshly oriented life ineluctably results in death (vs. 6). Because the Christian lives in the Spirit and not in the flesh (vs. 9), he is obliged not to the flesh to live according to its dictates (vs. 12).<sup>1</sup>

The dual significance of "flesh" in Paul is important for understanding Rom. 8.3, but before explaining its meaning in the formulation "in the likeness of sinful flesh," its connection with ἁμαρτίας necessitates a brief examination of this word. Paul employs the term ἁμαρτία some forty-seven times in Romans; by contrast in all his other letters combined it is only found thirteen times. What is even more striking is that forty-one of the forty-seven instances of ἁμαρτία in Romans occur in the section 5.12 to 8.11. A careful examination of the word in this section reveals that Paul is neither concerned with particular types of sins nor individual

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<sup>1</sup>The summary statement of Schweizer, "σάρξ," p. 135 is not far wide of the mark regarding morally corrupt flesh: "It becomes bad only when man builds his life on it. Sexuality on the one side and Pharisaic religiosity on the other are particularly blatant examples of this false orientation of human life. But everything else human and earthly can also be flesh. Where man understands himself as flesh, this describes his subjection to that which would draw him away from God. It may be felt so strongly that the flesh seems to be a power which controls man. Yet it is his own wrong disposition." Furnish, Theology and Ethics, pp. 117-118 makes essentially the same point: "But when it [the flesh] 'sells out' to sin and is thus taken over by sin, it allies itself with the evil forces of the present age and represents all that is 'worldly' and 'material' as opposed to what is divine and spiritual (cf. Rom. 15:27; I Cor. 3:1; 9:11; II Cor. 1:12; 10:4). For this reason the flesh may be described as a 'quisling' power seeking to rule man's life."

acts of sin but with sin as a power or principle exercising dominion over mankind.<sup>1</sup> At the very outset of the section, Paul contends, "δι' ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν" (5.12). The singular ἁμαρτία indicates that sin is already here conceptualized as a principle which has an existence independent of particular acts of sinning,<sup>2</sup> though it entered into the world through a particular act. When the apostle discusses the specific misdeed of Adam he no longer uses ἁμαρτία; instead he employs the words παράβασις (5.14) and παράπτωμα (5.15ff.). By this procedure he differentiates between sin (ἁμαρτία) as a principle dominating human existence and individual transgressions (παράβασις, παράπτωμα) committed under the power of sin (ἁμαρτία). The nature of sin as a principle controlling men's lives evidences itself in a whole series of verses commencing with 5.21 where Paul maintains, "Sin ruled (ἐβασίλευσεν) in death." Paul proceeds to talk about being enslaved (δουλεῦειν) to sin (6.6), sin reigning (βασιλεύειν) in the body (6.12), sin controlling (κυριεύειν) man (6.14), being set free (ἐλευθεροῦσθαι) from sin (6.18), sin deceiving (ἐξαπατᾶν) (7.11), being sold under the power of sin (πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) (7.14), sin dwelling in him (ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία) (7.17), the law of sin (νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας) (7.23, 25; 8.2) and so on (cf. 6.16, 20, 22; 7.8, 9, 13, 20).

Given the overwhelming stress on sin as the corrupting power or principle dominating human existence in Rom. 5.12 to 8.2, the ἁμαρτία of σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας requires a similar understanding. The flesh of man, his physical-intellectual self, is fundamentally perverse, morally corrupted, because it is the sphere in which the power of sin controls him. Essentially Paul has in mind the condition causing him to command in Rom. 6.12, "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body in obedience to its passions." The "mortal body" in

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<sup>1</sup>W. Grundmann, "ἁμαρτάνω. κτλ.," *TDNT* 1, pp. 309ff. treats Rom. 5-8 in some detail because, as he correctly recognizes, in this passage all of the terms for sin occur more frequently than anywhere else in Paul. He fails, however, to give special attention to the use of ἁμαρτία in this section.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Conzelmann, *Outline of Theology*, p. 194. He maintains, "The concept of sin derives from Judaism. But in Paul it no longer describes the individual failure against the individual commandment, but a trans-subjective power. Paul therefore uses the word predominately in the singular. The plural is used only when he borrows from the tradition."



this passage is synonymous with the flesh as the place where sin rules.<sup>1</sup> In 7.17b-18 he laments that what he hates he does because of "the sin which dwells in me." He thus concludes, "I know that good does not dwell in me, that is in my flesh." "Flesh of sin" is flesh enslaved to and ruled by sin<sup>2</sup> which possesses no moral good before the righteous God.

But does Paul then think that "flesh of sin," flesh under the power of sin, is the only state in which man ever exists? Or does man only come under the power of sin when he first commits an act of transgression? There is no evidence to support the assumption that Paul conceived the flesh to be morally degenerate on hereditary grounds;<sup>3</sup> by nature the flesh is neutral. But it becomes morally perverse through actual transgression. It is very difficult to explain why Adam's one transgression should lead to all men becoming sinners (5.19), and, in fact, Paul does not make it explicit. The answer seems to be, however, that, since Adam's conscious act of disobedience, the power of sin has prevailed in the world (5.12) to such an extent that it is inevitable that all men rebel against God (cf. Rom. 1.18ff.). Since Adam and because of Adam, sin and rebellion from God have dominated each generation of men so that each new generation is born into the world and the human race which are already under the power of sin. For this reason it is inevitable that all men sin and thereby come under the power of sin in their fleshly existence.<sup>4</sup>

With the above in mind, it is now possible to explain why Paul says that God sent his Son "ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας," rather than "in flesh of sin" or "as sinful flesh, but more than

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 199-200.

<sup>2</sup>The genitive ἁμαρτίας is possessive: "flesh possessed by the power of sin."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup>According to Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 253, "At the base of the idea of inherited sin lies the experience that every man is born into a humanity that is and always has been guided by a false striving. The so-derived understanding of existence applies as a matter of course to every man; and every man brings himself explicitly under it by his concrete transgression; thereby becoming jointly responsible for it." Whether the idea of "inherited sin" is really appropriate here is doubtful. Cf. also Furnish, Theology and Ethics, p. 117.

sinful flesh."<sup>1</sup> The noun ὁμοίωμα often indicates the similarity between two objects "but with no need for an inner connection between the original and the copy."<sup>2</sup> In other words it may emphasize similarity without implying identification or exact correspondence. On the other hand, ὁμοίωμα may mean "form" or "appearance" (cf. Deut. 4.12; Ex. 1.26; Rev. 9.7). If what has been suggested regarding σὰρξ ἁμαρτίας is correct, Paul could not say that the Son of God was sent "in flesh of sin" because he believed that Christ never committed sin (cf. 2 Cor. 5.21) but always remained obedient to God (cf. Rom. 5.19; Phil. 2.8). All other men possessed flesh under the power of sin by virtue of their own sins but not the Son of God. His human existence was real; he was as much a man as any man has ever been; but he did not succumb to the pervasive power of sin; and therefore his flesh was never sold under the power of sin. Paul selected ὁμοίωμα in Rom. 8.3 to safeguard Christ from direct identification with sinful flesh which Paul understood to be flesh under the power of sin because of actual transgression.<sup>3</sup>

The theological motivation for Paul's refusal to identify Christ's flesh as "flesh of sin" can be deduced from what is said in the remainder of vs. 3: "God sent his Son in the likeness of flesh of sin and for sin (περὶ ἁμαρτίας)." Michel, among others, accepts that the περὶ ἁμαρτίας "entspricht hier dem kultischen Sprachgebrauch der LXX (Lev. 4,3.14; 5,6), nimmt also ausdrücklich die Kreuzeslehre von Röm. 3,25 wieder auf."<sup>4</sup> That Paul intended a direct allusion to

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<sup>1</sup>Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 381-382 seems to understand the passage in some such fashion. Against this view is the fact that Paul has already in Rom. 8.3 described Christ as the Son of God sent into the world. This statement clearly distinguishes Christ from the rest of humanity. It is thus unnecessary for Paul to guard Christ's divine origin over against his humanity through the qualifying word, ὁμοίωμα.

<sup>2</sup>Schneider, "ὁμοίωμα," p. 191.

<sup>3</sup>The view expressed here is very close to what might be called the traditional one. Cf. Leenhardt, Romans, p. 203; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 193; and Dodd, Romans, pp. 119-120. See also Michel, Römer, pp. 250-251; Käsemann, Römer, p. 207; *idem*, "Philippians 2:5-11," p. 68; and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 241. Through the detailed discussion of ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας, it is hoped that a clearer conception of Paul's meaning has been arrived at and thereby a firmer basis for the traditional understanding has been achieved.

<sup>4</sup>Michel, Römer, p. 251. Cf. Schweizer, "Υἱός," p. 383; and Käsemann, Römer, pp. 204, 206.



the Old Testament "sin offering" is far from certain,<sup>1</sup> but "for sin" does seem to allude to Christ's death on the cross as the place where sin was decisively dealt with (cf. Rom. 4.25; 6.10; 1 Cor. 15.3), and thus Michel is correct in referring to Rom. 3.25.

In 2 Cor. 5.21, a passage already examined in another connection, Paul states that God made Christ who knew no sin, to be sin on our behalf. It was Christ's sinlessness which allowed God to make him the bearer of sin in our place.<sup>2</sup> If the Son of God died περὶ ἁμαρτίας, as Rom. 8.3 implies, then he did not, and could not, come under the power of sin in his own flesh through sinning for then his death would have been no different from anyone else's. The significance and power of Christ's life and death is that he lived among men who were completely under the power of sin, in a world dominated by sin, yet he became the only man to ever remain completely faithful and obedient to God (cf. Rom. 5.19; Phil. 2.8). Although the link between Christ's Sonship and his obedience is never explicitly made, on the basis of Rom. 8.3 and Phil. 2.6ff., Christ's unparalleled obedience and righteousness presuppose his unique Sonship relationship with God. Even while being a man, he remained totally true to his origin in God, something which from Adam forward all other men had failed to do.

In the final words of Rom. 8.3, Paul claims that God, sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Professor Cranfield has cogently argued that ἐν τῇ σαρκί at the end of vs. 3 is to be construed with κατέκρινεν, the main verb of vss. 3 and 4, rather than with τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.<sup>3</sup> The ἐν τῇ σαρκί of necessity refers to Christ's human flesh as the place where God accomplished his condemnation of sin and overthrew its unlimited power over mankind.<sup>4</sup> The only explanation for this assertion is that Christ, as the Son of God sent into human existence,

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<sup>1</sup> Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 193; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 156; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 180. Both Professor Barrett (p. 179) and Bultmann, Zweite Korinther, p. 166 see a connection between the thought of 2 Cor. 5.21 and Rom. 8.3.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 382.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. note 3, p. 135, supra.

remained outside the control of sin and therefore could be used by God, on account of his unique righteousness (cf. Rom. 5.18, 19; 1 Cor. 1.30), to break the power of sin over all men (cf. Rom. 5.21 and ch. 6). Vs. 4 explains the purpose of this fracturing of sin's power in Christ. The condemnation of sin and the execution of God's judgment against it has the effect of allowing the fulfillment of the demand of the law, that men should be righteous, in those who live according to the Spirit. Paul affirms in vss. 3-4 that the righteousness required by the law, and thus by God, righteousness which the law itself could not produce (vs. 3a), is produced for the believer through God's own act in his Son (cf. Rom. 10.4; 1 Cor. 1.30; 2 Cor. 5.21). In other words, God has accomplished his saving purpose, that man should be righteous, through his own Son; but this only applies to those who live according to God's Spirit. For Paul, the sending of the Son in human flesh, in the likeness of sinful flesh, is the necessary presupposition for believing that God has condemned sin in the flesh of the man Jesus thereby fulfilling the law's demand for righteousness.

#### C. The Coming of the Son of God: Phil. 2.6-11

The famous hymn or poetic piece, Phil. 2.6-11, has received an immense amount of attention from New Testament exegetes, particularly in the present century.<sup>1</sup> Interest in the passage has focused on a variety of questions.<sup>2</sup> No word in the entire New Testament has enjoyed more attention than the problematic hapax legomenon

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<sup>1</sup>A very thorough bibliography is available in Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 320-339 and more recent works are cited by J. Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology in Phil. II, 6-11," RB 83 (1976), pp. 25-26.

<sup>2</sup>Discussion of the state of scholarly opinion on virtually every issue involved in the exegesis and background of Phil. 2.6-11 up until the mid-1960's may be found in Martin, Carmen Christi. Since Martin's work enough new material has come out that someone could probably justify another monograph dedicated to surveying scholarly work on Phil. 2.6-11 since 1965. Apart from the exegetical and historical questions regarding Phil. 2.6-11, modern theologians also employ Phil. 2.6ff. as a foundational support for so-called kenotic Christology. On this see E.R. Fairweather's "Appended Note. The Kenotic Christology," in F.W. Beare, The Epistle to the Philippians (1959), pp. 159-174.



ἁρπαγμός of Phil. 2.6, yet no consensus exists as to its precise meaning in its context in Phil. 2. The problematic meanings of μορφή θεοῦ/μορφή δούλου, τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, and ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν have also proved sources of much discussion among commentators. Since E. Lohmeyer first set out a poetic structure for Phil. 2.6-11 over fifty years ago in his seminal essay entitled Kyrios Jesus. Eine Untersuchung zu Phil. 2, 5-11 (1927-28),<sup>1</sup> various investigators have attempted to improve on his scheme of six strophes each consisting of three lines.<sup>2</sup> But far and away the most difficult and persistent questions of the twentieth century have been the problem of the conceptual background of various motifs in the hymn and the provenance of the hymn itself. The work of Lohmeyer mentioned above and his widely available commentary on Philippians in the famous Meyer series, Der Brief an die Philipper (1929), launched the modern debate on the background and provenance of the hymn. After fifty years of intense investigation into these questions the final solution seems no closer than it has ever been. The possibilities for the conceptual background of the hymn and its various images range from Palestinian Jewish to Hellenistic Gnostic, to Hellenistic Jewish. In the same way various exegetes track the actual origin of the hymn to Aramaic speaking Christian circles, to Gnostic circles, to Hellenistic Christian (non-Gnostic) circles.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This work has not been available to us.

<sup>2</sup>M.D. Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," Jesus und Paulus (1975), p. 157 wisely observes: "The fact that different scholars produce different poetic structures makes one slightly hesitant about the value of this exercise. . . . One of our difficulties is in knowing what we are looking for. If this passage is poetry, it is certainly not Greek poetry; is it then a translation of an Aramaic 'hymn'?" She adds: "One of the difficulties is that the passage as we have it never really fits the patterns into which the commentators try to push it; they therefore excise certain lines as Pauline glosses. But there is a dangerous circularity in this kind of method; I suspect that often those who analyse the lines have decided which words are Pauline glosses before they start their poetic analysis." In light of what Hooker says, we shall not attempt to discuss the poetic structure of the hymn because all reconstructions remain hypothetical.

<sup>3</sup>The major lines of the debate are well laid out by Martin in Carmen Christi. Perhaps the only significantly new treatment of the problem since Martin's work is the essay by J. Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology." Even he builds on the work of others in trying to argue that the hymn reflects the beginnings of Christological reflection when the early Christian community (presumably Hellenistic in orientation) attempted to explain how a human being (non-pre-existent) could be the savior of the world. He finds a Christology based

The major problems leading to this diversity of opinion stem from the elusive character of the language in the hymn and the limitations of our knowledge about pre-Pauline Christianity. M.D. Hooker has observed with perspicacity:

If the passage is pre-Pauline, then we have no guidelines to help us in understanding its meaning. Commentators may speculate about the background—but we know very little about pre-Pauline Christianity and nothing at all about the context in which the passage originated.<sup>1</sup>

She then goes on to set out what must be acknowledged as the correct procedure for approaching Phil. 2.6-11:

It may therefore be more profitable to look first at the function of these verses in the present context and to enquire about possible parallels within Paul's own writings. For even if the material is non-Pauline, we may expect Paul himself to have interpreted it and used it in a Pauline manner.<sup>2</sup>

Quite apart from the soundness of the methodological approach suggested by Hooker, our interest in Phil. 2.6-11 centers on its significance for Paul's Son of God Christology and therefore our quest must be for Paul's own understanding of the hymn.<sup>3</sup> To this we now turn.<sup>4</sup>

### 1. The Problem of the Context

The hymn or poem of Phil. 2.6-11 stands in a paraenetic

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on the righteous man of Wis. 2 and 3 who is then exalted by God to a position of Lordship. The proposal is an interesting one, but Murphy-O'Connor's exegesis of vss. 6-8 and his explanation of their background fail to carry conviction.

<sup>1</sup>Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," p. 152.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 152. Cf. supra, p. 91 regarding the problem of the hypothetical formula in Rom. 1.3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Although it is not essential for our exegesis, the possibility that Paul or a close disciple composed Phil. 2.6-11 cannot be ruled out completely. Cf. Kümmel, Theology, pp. 152-153 who suggests the possibility of Pauline authorship of Phil. 2.6-11 and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 187ff. who aggressively defends Pauline authorship.

<sup>4</sup>Owing to the vastness of the literature on Phil. 2.6-11 and the plethora of opinions on virtually each word in the hymn, it is only possible to set out our own position and the exegetical basis for it in what follows, though obviously a certain amount of reference to the work of others will be necessary.



section beginning with Phil. 2.1-5 and continuing in vss. 12ff., but this very location of the hymn and more especially its relationship to the thought of vs. 5 have caused considerable debate. Since the time of E. Käsemann's "Kritische Analyse von Phil. 2, 5-11," New Testament investigators have commonly come to deny the possibility that Paul intended the portrayal of Christ's self-abasement as an ethical example or ideal on which the Philippians were to model their own behavior.<sup>1</sup> Following the lead of Käsemann, a large number of scholars accept that Paul recites the Christ hymn to show that the Philippians' share in the body of Christ resulted from the saving events associated with Christ.<sup>2</sup> In other words the ethical imperative is grounded on the saving activity of Christ. Käsemann and those accepting his view base their conclusions on three primary observations.<sup>3</sup> The first is that "in Christ Jesus" of Phil. 2.5 must have its normal incorporative meaning and therefore does not refer to the person of Christ and the way in which he acted in his relationship towards God. According to Käsemann the hymn even fails to make explicit to whom Christ was obedient. The second consideration against the ethical interpretation is that Paul does not normally appeal to the person of Christ as an ethical model. The third argument is that if vss. 6-8 were intended to present an ethical model, then vss. 9-11 would be a pointless excursus. On the other hand when vss. 6-11 are taken as the soteriological foundation for the ethical imperative of vs. 5, vss. 9-11 are absolutely necessary.

Käsemann and others may possibly be correct to maintain that the original purpose of the "hymn" was to extol the savior from heaven and to set forth the saving events connected with him. But even if

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann's seminal essay is now available in English translation as "A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2:5-11," JTS 5 (1968), pp. 45-88.

<sup>2</sup>Among the many following the lead of Käsemann are G. Bornkamm, "On Understanding the Christ Hymn: Philippians 2.6-11," Early Christian Experience, p. 112; Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 84-88, 289-291; Beare, Philippians, pp. 75-76, and J. Gniska, Der Philipperbrief (1976<sup>2</sup>), pp. 108-110.

<sup>3</sup>Käsemann, "Philippians 2.5-11," pp. 83-84 only argues the first and the third reason, though he does say on p. 74 that the hymn presents Christ as "Urbild, not Vorbild; archetype not model." See Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 87-88 and Gniska, Philipperbrief, pp. 108-109 for the second argument.

this is correct, and it is far from certain, it cannot be made normative for Paul's application of the hymn in the context of Phil. 2.<sup>1</sup> C.F.D. Moule urges that the prevailing exegesis, dependent as it is on Käsemann, makes two fundamental mistakes. First it assumes that the "in Christ Jesus" of vs. 5 "represents the 'Pauline' incorporation in Christ, merely because it often does in other contexts and because, taken so it would form a close parallel to the ἐν ὁμῶν" of vs. 5.<sup>2</sup> Moule's rejection of this assumption carries considerable weight because he himself has examined Paul's "incorporation language," especially where "in Christ" and related expressions have and do not have incorporative significance.<sup>3</sup> Those who appeal to "standard Pauline usage" do not appear to have taken the trouble to examine how often "in Christ" language does not conform to the supposed standard usage or at least is ambiguous. Secondly the prevailing exegesis makes the strange assumption that "Christians could be conceived of (whether by Paul or someone whom he is quoting) as adopting one attitude in their mutual relations with one another, and another attitude as incorporated in Christ."<sup>4</sup> This assumption is required by the force of the ὁ καί in vs. 5, but it is obviously an absurd conception for the Christian. The strength of Moule's observations are underscored by the fact that Martin, who is committed to the basic view of Käsemann, is unable to provide a refutation for Larsson's similar criticism.<sup>5</sup>

In spite of attempts to explain it away, the theme of imitatio Christi does occur in Paul. In 2 Cor. 8.9 Paul appeals to the example of Christ's liberality in becoming poor for the sake of others to encourage the Corinthians in giving generously to the poor of Judea. Paul also presents Christ's attitude and behavior as models for

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," pp. 153-154.

<sup>2</sup>C.F.D. Moule, "Further Reflexions on Philippians 2:5-11," Apostolic History and the Gospel, p. 265. Moule's conclusions are essentially the same as E. Larsson, Christus als Vorbild. Eine Untersuchung zu den paulinischen Tauf- und Eikontexten (1962), pp. 231ff., though their conclusions were arrived at independently.

<sup>3</sup>See Moule, Phenomenon, pp. 22-29 and now also his Origin of Christology, pp. 54ff.

<sup>4</sup>Moule, "Philippians 2:5-11," pp. 265-266.

<sup>5</sup>Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 86-87.



Christians to emulate in Rom. 15.1-7 (though there are other considerations involved in this passage) and says that he himself imitates Christ in 1 Cor. 11.1 (cf. 1 Thess. 1.6). Thus, in principle, an appeal to Christ's attitude and behavior as a paradigm for the Christian's life cannot be ruled out for Phil. 2.5-11.<sup>1</sup>

In her recent study of Philippians 2.6-11, M.D. Hooker has met head on the claim that vss. 9-11 are superfluous if the hymn is intended to present Christ's self-abasement as an ethical model. Hooker shows that in Phil. 3 Paul draws on the language of Phil. 2.9-11 "in describing the goal of Christian life which he links with the parousia."<sup>2</sup> Since the destiny of the true follower of Christ is conformity with Christ in the resurrection, vss. 9-11 have a place in a call to follow the ethical example of Christ which is part of being conformed to what Christ is.

The above considerations indicate that the prevailing exegesis of Käsemann and those who follow his lead fails to explain vs. 5 satisfactorily and also does not exclude the ethical interpretation of vss. 5-11.<sup>3</sup> Although it is not decisive for the actual exegesis of the hymn, Paul apparently employed the Christ hymn to provide a model of self-giving for the Philippians.

## 2. Phil. 2.6

Judging by the variety of interpretations and the amount of material written concerning Phil. 2.6, interpreters have found this verse the most difficult and perhaps the most crucial for understanding the whole of the Christ hymn. The first problem to confront the interpreter of Phil. 2.6-11 centers in the meaning of the words ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. Are these words related to Gen. 1.26-27? Do they mean that Christ is the second Adam who is implicitly contrasted with the first Adam who sought to grasp equality with God? Or does existence in the "form of God" refer to the divinity of Christ? Is the opening assertion of the hymn for all intents and purposes an ontological statement concerning the divine nature of Christ in his pre-existence? Are the words "being in the form of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," pp. 154-155.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 155-156.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the criticisms of G.N. Stanton, Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching (1974), pp. 100-103.

God" synonymous with "to be equal with God" in the second half of the verse? Before beginning our exegesis of vs. 6, however, a presuppositional problem must be discussed.

a. The Attack on Pre-existence in Phil. 2.6-8

Several writers in recent years have attempted to question the nearly axiomatic assumption (which has been assumed in this thesis hitherto) that Phil. 2.6 refers to the pre-existence of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Those who attack the assumed presence of the idea of pre-existence do so on the grounds that Paul was not the original author but that the hymn originated at a very early stage of Christian reflection before the pre-existence of Christ had been introduced. Although our interest centers in Paul's understanding of the hymn and therefore the original meaning of the hymn is not determinative for our purposes, it nevertheless must be asked whether or not Paul would have understood the hymn in a way completely different from its original meaning, particularly if it were a Christian hymn as J. Murphy-O'Connor, one of the most recent advocates of this position, maintains.<sup>2</sup> Because Murphy-O'Connor purports to complement and correct Talbert and Bartsch, and because his views appear to be inherently the most probable, we may for convenience examine his case to test the plausibility of the thesis.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. C.H. Talbert, "The Problem of Pre-existence in Philip-  
pians 2:6-11," JBL 86 (1967), pp. 141-153; H.-W. Bartsch, Die Konkrete Wahrheit und die Lüge der Spekulation (1974); and Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology," pp. 25-50. For others holding this view see J.G. Gibbs, Creation and Redemption (1971), pp. 80-81.

<sup>2</sup>Bartsch, Konkrete Wahrheit, pp. 107-108 believes that Paul himself did not interpret the hymn in terms of pre-existence. He maintains on the basis of vs. 5, Paul's interpretive introduction to the hymn: "Der Christus Jesus hat in seinem Erdenwirken gezeigt, wie die Gemeinde leben und wirken soll in der Hoffnung, dass ihr Weg zu dem gleichen Ziel führt, das Christus erreicht hat. Damit ist bereits ausgeschlossen, dass vom Präexistenten die Rede ist; denn von einer Präexistenz der Gemeinde oder der einzelnen Christen gehen die Überlegungen des Paulus niemals aus. Da wir aber für den Hymnus selbst aufgrund der Verwendung von Gn 1, 26f in der Adam-Christus-Parallele die Präexistenzvorstellung ausgeschlossen hatten, bestätigt die paränetische Verwendung des Hymnus durch Paulus diese Interpretation."

<sup>3</sup>Talbert's position is subjected to severe, though just criticism, by R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, Pre-existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man (1973), pp. 157-159. One of the major weaknesses in Bartsch's position is his dependence on a connection between Phil. 2.6 and Gen. 1.26-27, a connection which is far from proven.



Murphy-O'Connor begins by pointing out how prevalent the unexamined hypothesis of pre-existence is, and he lays blame for it on the "uncritical acceptance of the current consensus, an acceptance that is facilitated by the dogmatic understanding of Christ as the Second Person of the Trinity and by certain statements of Paul which seem to imply the pre-existence of Christ."<sup>1</sup> This may be a valid point to make against many, but it does not explain why earlier seminal writers like Lohmeyer and Käsemann, who attribute the hymn to quite different, non-Pauline sources, both understood the hymn in terms of pre-existence. But this point aside, the real question is whether Murphy-O'Connor's position is sound. He rightly sees that the case for pre-existence primarily rests on the meaning of vs. 6.<sup>2</sup> Instead of initiating his discussion with ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ he prefers to begin by treating the problematic second part of vs. 6. Surveying the possible meanings of ἁρπαγμός, he favors the interpretation "'he did not regard being equal with God as something to take advantage of'."<sup>3</sup> In this he accepts without question the linguistic work of R.W. Hoover<sup>4</sup> (though Hoover's work fails to be conclusive because he is dependent upon later sources, discounts the significance of an important exception to his findings, and assumes that Christ possessed equality with God). On the basis of the hymn itself, as well as Pauline thought, we shall shortly show that Christ did not possess equality with God, a point absolutely necessary for Hoover's contention to be correct. But let us return to the argument of Murphy-O'Connor. Having adopted the res retinenda line, he maintains Christ possessed equality with God.

Following the work of P. Grelot, he urges that equality with God does not refer to Christ's divine nature but to receiving treatment like that accorded to God. He proposes that the ὡς means "like" or "as if" and that the comparison with God in Phil. 2.6b should be viewed against the background of Wisdom of Solomon 2-3 where the righteous have a right to incorruption.<sup>5</sup> He thus concludes:

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<sup>1</sup>Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology," p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>4</sup>R.W. Hoover, "The Harpagmos Enigma: A Philological Solution," HTR 64 (1971), pp. 95-119. This essay draws on Hoover's Harvard Ph.D. dissertation.

<sup>5</sup>Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology," p. 39.

Here we have a precise parallel to the two elements of condition (sinlessness) and treatment (incorruptibility) which are implied in Phil., II, 6b. Incorruptibility, however, was a divine prerogative. In the right to incorruptibility that his sinlessness gave him Christ had the right to be treated as if he were God. Christ, however, did not turn this situation to his own advantage (ouch harpagmon hêgêsato). He did not demand the treatment that his condition merited. On the contrary (alla) he permitted himself to be put to death.<sup>1</sup>

Murphy-O'Connor's identification of τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ with sinlessness and incorruptibility considerably stretches the bounds of probable exegesis. In the first place, his reference to the sinlessness of Christ is an unsupported inference in the context based on τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ. But in Wis. 2-3 blamelessness is never equated as "likeness" with God. On the basis of the second half of the hymn, τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ is much more probably to be understood in terms of universal sovereignty and worship. Even in the context of Wis. 2-3 it is improbable that incorruption is synonymous with ἴσα θεῷ, unless being made in the εἰκὼν of God qualifies one for ἴσα θεῷ. It is also clear from Wis. 3.1ff. that the righteous man does not possess incorruptibility as an inherent right but that God grants it to him on the basis of divine testing through tribulation. Incorruption in Wis. 2-3 applies to the next life not the present. Murphy-O'Connor is forced to ignore this whole line of thought in Wisdom in order to argue that Christ possessed divine incorruptibility in this life. In other words, if Murphy-O'Connor is right, by implication and in contradistinction to Wis. 2-3, Jesus need never have experienced physical death, he only chose to do so. (He takes ἐκέκωσεν to refer to Christ's death.) The similarity between Wis. 2-3 and Phil. 2.6b is in the end more apparent than real, and Murphy-O'Connor's use of Wis. 2-3 to explain Phil. 2.6b in its context creates the strange conception that Christ need not have died even as a man.

Murphy-O'Connor goes on to accept J. Jeremias' contention that ἐαυτὸν ἐκέκωσεν in vs. 7 derives from Is. 53.12 and refers to Christ's death. He then adds that "taking the form of a slave" means "that Christ accepted the mode of existence of 'a slave', i.e. one conditioned by suffering, humiliation, shame, and ultimately death."<sup>2</sup> He concludes that such a mode of existence is precisely the one

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 41.



ascribed to the righteous man in Wis. 2. This overlooks two very obvious differences. The figure of Wis. 2 is never described as a slave or a servant, and he does not choose his destiny; rather his enemies cause his suffering, humiliation, shame, and death. Murphy-O'Connor's explanation of vs. 7ab also suffers from another difficulty. If vss. 6-7b refer to the earthly existence of Jesus then vss. 7c-8 are redundant and a double reference is made to Christ's death.<sup>1</sup> Murphy-O'Connor tries to counter this by arguing that vs. 8 provides the motive (obedience) for the suffering of one who need not have suffered.<sup>2</sup> But this is not based on Wis. 2-3 or Isa. 53 for that matter. The righteous man suffers because he is righteous. Suffering and physical death are not options but facts of the present order of existence for the righteous man in Wis. 2-3.

What of ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων of vs. 6? Murphy-O'Connor notes the occurrence of the term εἰκών in Wis. 2.23 where it relates to Gen. 1.26f. Following the work of F.-W. Eltester, he points out that εἰκών and μορφή are interchangeable in the LXX; he therefore concludes that Phil. 2.6a:

may mean nothing more than the Pauline hos estin eikon tou theou (2 Cor., IV, 4) a phrase that occurs in a context replete with allusions to the Creation narrative and which is intended to present Christ as the embodiment of authentic humanity."<sup>3</sup>

He recognizes that if Phil. 2.6 depends on Wis. 2.23 for its thought form then εἰκών and not μορφή should be expected in Phil. 2.6, but he urges that μορφή was chosen for emphasis and to permit a contrast with μορφή δούλου in vs. 7. The relevance of Wis. 2.23 depends very heavily on "ἴσα θεῷ" being identified with the idea of incorruptibility found in Wis. 2-3, but this identification, as was seen, is far from certain. Moreover, as is obvious, a variety of other explanations are available for the ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ including a direct reference to Gen. 1.26f. understood in terms of a heavenly figure in the image or form of God.

In the end Murphy-O'Connor discovers a Christology in the hymn which began with "the uniqueness of Christ considered precisely

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<sup>1</sup>The supposed parallelism between Phil. 2.6-7b and vss. 7c-8 also leaves the hymn unbalanced with two essential synonymous strophes about the earthly experience of Jesus and only one about his exaltation.

<sup>2</sup>Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology," p. 42.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

as man."<sup>1</sup> The author of the original hymn attempted to explain how a mere man could be the savior of mankind. The answer "was that even as a man he was somehow different."<sup>2</sup> The suffering servant of Isaiah and the suffering righteous man of Wisdom of Solomon became the means for explaining the humanity but also the uniqueness of Christ. With this Murphy-O'Connor believes that he has overturned the prevailing view which presupposes the pre-existence of Christ in Phil. 2.6-11. The weaknesses observed above with various key aspects of his interpretation, however, militate against his explanation and render it hardly more than an interesting but improbable explanation of Phil. 2.6-8. This does not mean that Christ's pre-existence may be assumed in Phil. 2.6-11 without further proof. But the failure of Murphy-O'Connor to carry conviction represents the failure of the most serious challenge yet to those who interpret Phil. 2.6-11 in terms of Christ's pre-existence.

b. "In the Form of God"

The ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ of Phil. 2.6 is generally interpreted in one of three ways. The traditional view relates existence "in the form of God" to Christ's pre-existence, understanding it to imply Christ's divine mode of being if not his divine nature.<sup>3</sup> The second approach explains μορφῇ in terms of Gen. 1.26-27. Holders of this view claim that the μορφῇ of Phil. 2.6 is synonymous with εἰκών and refers to Christ as the Second Adam, Man par excellence, true Man in the undistorted image of God, though it must be admitted that consider-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. J.B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (1908), pp. 110, 127-133; C. Spicq, "Note sur ΜΟΡΦΗ dans les Papyrus et quelques Inscriptions," RB 80 (1973), pp. 44-45; and D.H. Wallace, "A Note on morphé," TZ 22 (1966), pp. 19-25. Käsemann's "Philippians 2:5-11," pp. 59ff. put the traditional view on a new foundation by introducing the use of μορφῇ in Hellenistic religious language in order to establish the meaning of μορφῇ in Phil. 2.6a. Käsemann concludes that μορφῇ should be translated "mode of being" (Daseinweise); but as Martin, Carmen Christi, p. 126 observes, Käsemann does not mean this "in the sense of a proof of Christ's divinity within the Godhead, but rather His place as the Heavenly Redeemer who was thought of (in Hellenistic religion) as a divine being." Others essentially accepting Käsemann's view include G. Bornkamm, "Christ-Hymn," pp. 113-114; Hamerton-Kelly, Pre-existence, pp. 167-168; Beare, Philippians, pp. 76-79; Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 227ff.; and Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 208.



able differences exist among those taking this view.<sup>1</sup> E. Schweizer has offered a third alternative. He avers that the best translation for μορφή in Phil. 2.6 is "'Status', die Position, die Stellung."<sup>2</sup> This rendering comports well with vs. 7ab which says, 'He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.' It is perfectly possible for a person to "empty himself" of his status or position, while it is inherently improbable that the contrasting μορφή of vss. 6 and 7 should be interpreted in terms of Christ changing his nature. This third view, which in many respects is the simplest and most attractive of the three, requires that τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ of vs. 6b characterize Christ's pre-human existence. (This is true of the first view as well.) But unfortunately, as will be shown shortly, Paul did not believe that Christ in his pre-existence possessed "equality with God."

The uncertainty of interpretation inheres in the word μορφή itself because it was capable of a wide variety of usages and nuances in both the Classical period and the Hellenistic period. The word only occurs three times in the New Testament (besides Phil. 2. 6, 7, it is found in Mk. 16.12, part of a late addition to the Gospel) and seven times in the LXX where it translates four different Hebrew words and on the other three occasions is located in material without a Hebrew original for comparison. For this reason, arguments based primarily on the Biblical data tend to be inconclusive.<sup>3</sup> Thus Cullmann fails to convince when he argues that

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<sup>1</sup>Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 107-119 holds this position and attributes its origin to J. Hering. Cf. also Cullmann, Christology, pp. 175ff. and Hooker, "Philippians 2.6-11," pp. 160-161. Ultimately the position of Murphy-O'Connor which was discussed above falls into this realm. Jervell, Imago Dei, tries to combine the insights of Käsemann with this approach, but see the criticisms of Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 132-133. See Wallace, "Note on morphé," pp. 19-25 for a critical assessment of the views of Hering, Cullmann, et al.

<sup>2</sup>E. Schweizer, Erniedrigung und Erhöhung, pp. 95-96. He is followed in this interpretation by O. Hofius, Der Christushymn Philipper 2, 6-11 (1976) pp. 56-58 and P. Grelot, "Deux expressions difficiles de Philippiens 2, 6-7," Biblica 53 (1973), p. 502.

<sup>3</sup>The related noun μόρφωσις occurs twice (Rom. 2.20 and 2 Tim. 3.5); Paul employs the verb μορφοῦσθαι (Gal. 4.19) and the compound verbs συμμορφίζεσθαι (Phil. 3.10) and μεταμορφοῦσθαι (Rom. 12.2; 2 Cor. 3.18). This latter verb also appears in Mk. 9.2 and Mt. 17.2. Finally Paul uses the adjective σύμμορφος in Rom. 8.29 and Phil. 3.21.

"μορφή in Phil. 2.6 is immediately related to the εἰκών concept since the Semitic root  $\text{נ.ו.ן}$  or its synonym  $\text{נ.ז.ז}$  can correspond to either of the two Greek words."<sup>1</sup> His evidence for this consists of the fact that  $\text{נ.ז.ז}$  normally translated as εἰκών in the LXX is once translated as μορφή (Dan. 3.19) and that the Peshitta of Phil. 2.6 has demutha. It may in fact be the case that the two words are closely related, but such limited evidence is insufficient to justify the identification of μορφή in Phil. 2.6 with εἰκών. Moreover, even if the two terms are closely related, it does not prove Cullmann's thesis that Phil. 2.6 concerns the Heavenly Man (or Second Adam) created in the image of God, who contrasts with the First Adam of Gen. 1.26f.<sup>2</sup> Eikon language in Paul has another connection as we have seen.

Another line of approach to the meaning of the difficult word μορφή in Phil. 2.6, 7 is possible. The word μορφή, as is well-known, often denotes "outward appearance," and as Spicq has shown, in Hellenistic Greek it frequently connotes "beauty of appearance."<sup>3</sup> In this general vein of usage μορφή was used when discussing the relationship of a child to his parent, for a child carries the μορφή of his parents in his outward appearance. Thus in 4 Macc. 15.4 the writer comments of parenthood: "ψυχῆς τε καὶ μορφῆς ὁμοιότητα εἰς μικρὸν παιδὸς χαρακτῆρα θαυμάσιον ἐναποσφραγίζομεν." According to R.B. Townshend this line of thinking was quite common in antiquity.<sup>4</sup> Philo even observes that it is the "seminal

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<sup>1</sup>Cullmann, Christology, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup>Christ is only said to be the Heavenly man after the resurrection, an idea which would make nonsense of the thought progression in Phil. 2.6-11. See infra, p. 213.

<sup>3</sup>C. Spicq, "Note sur MOPQH," p. 41. Spicq summarizes the breadth of meaning possible for μορφή in the following manner: "le bilan de cet inventaire est pourtant instructif, car il révèle un éventail de signification assez étendu: stature, forme, condition, trait, apparence extérieure, aspect—le plus souvent beau—; si l'acception de représentation, reproduction, ressemblance est bien attestée, jamais elle n'équivaut à 'image', proprement dite, pour laquelle le grec disposait d'un autre vocable; d'ailleurs l'icône digne de ce nom étant ressemblante est immuable, tandis que le morphè est essentiellement modifiable." (pp. 44-45).

<sup>4</sup>Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha 2, p.680, note on 4 Macc. 15.4.



forces" which "preserve similarities of the body in form (μορφή) and carriage and gait, and of the soul in projects and actions" (Leg. ad Gaium 55).

This interest of Hellenistic thought in the relationship between the parent and the form or appearance of his offspring opens up an enticing possibility with respect to Phil. 2.6. New Testament scholars almost inevitably introduce the concept of Christ's Sonship into the discussion of Phil. 2.6-11, because the passage seems closely related to other Sonship passages in Paul. The first half of the hymn recalls the "sending of the Son" passages (Rom. 8.3-4; Gal. 4.4-5), though in Phil. 2 the emphasis is on the free choice of the pre-existent one. As E. Käsemann states quite confidently: "das christologisch angewandte Motiv der Sendung des präexistenten Sohnes . . . begegnet auch in Hymnus Phil. 2,6ff."<sup>1</sup> The pre-existent Sonship of Christ may be assumed by Rom. 1.3-4 as well. The second half of the Philippian hymn, vss. 9-11, recalls Rom. 1.4 where, according to Paul, the one who is already Son receives power or sovereignty from God.<sup>2</sup> It also parallels 1 Cor. 15.24-28 where Paul employs the Father-Son language in a context which concerns the subjection of the world to Christ. The end of the Christ hymn in Philippians exults that "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Although the Fatherhood of God may be mentioned in part for poetic fullness of expression, it also reflects the fact that confessing Christ as Lord glorifies God because in a unique way he is the Father of the one receiving universal homage: honor and worship directed to Christ redound to the glory of God his Father.<sup>3</sup>

The expression ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων has long been associated with Paul's Sonship Christology. Typical of those making this connection is H. Conzelmann who maintains: "Granted,

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, Römer, p. 206. Cf. Kramer, Christ, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ibid., p. 123, Kramer maintains that the title Son of God formed the "bracket within which the two parts of the hymn [vss. 6-8 and 9-11] were brought together." While the idea of Christ's Sonship does run throughout the hymn, we doubt that Kramer is correct in asserting that two different Sonship traditions have coalesced in Phil. 2.6-11.

<sup>3</sup>On God's unique Fatherhood of Christ cf. Rom. 15.6; 2 Cor. 1.3; 11.31; Col. 1.3. In 1 Cor. 8.6 the reference to the Fatherhood of God is necessary to insure the subordination of Christ, the one Lord, to God.

the title 'Son' does not occur here, but it is indicated by the content. The revealer is like God and like him in substance; that is, of the same nature: ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων."<sup>1</sup> The problem with viewing μορφῇ in terms of Christ's divine nature has already been indicated. It forces the conclusion that Christ underwent a change of nature in (or before) becoming incarnate. Such a thought is difficult if not impossible in itself; and it is unlikely that Paul would have thought in such an explicitly ontological fashion. This is not to deny, however, that statements by Paul may have ontological ramifications of which he was aware.

By seeing the ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ of Phil. 2.6 against the background of interest in the visible likeness of the offspring to his parent, excellent sense can be made of this expression. As the Son of God, Christ bore the outward μορφῇ of his Father in his pre-existence. What was this outward appearance of God which could be laid aside? The most probable answer is the visible glory of God. It has already been shown in another connection that the glory of God was closely connected to his visible manifestation in the Old Testament and that Paul believed Christ possessed this divine glory in a tangible way in the post-resurrection period.<sup>2</sup> If Paul taught that Christ was the Son of God sent by God into the world, as he did, then in all probability he believed that the Son of God, who was the eikon of God, possessed the visible glory of the Father before his entry into human existence.

Two passages from non-Biblical Jewish writers confirm that the word μορφῇ was used of the divine outward appearance. Josephus in his work Contra Apionem expostulates of God:

By His works and bounties He is plainly seen, indeed more manifest than ought else; but His form and magnitude surpass our powers of description. No material, however costly, are fit to make an image of Him; no art and skill to conceive and represent it. The like of him we have never seen, we do not imagine, and it is impious to conjecture (μορφὴν δὲ καὶ μέγεθος ἡμῖν ἄφατος. πᾶσα μὲν γὰρ ὕλη πρὸς εἰκόνα τὴν τούτου κἂν ἢ πολυτελὴς ἄτιμος, πᾶσα δὲ τέχνη πρὸς μιμήσεως ἐπίνοιαν ἄτεχνος ) Contra Apionem 2, 190.

This passage implies an interesting connection between μορφῇ and εἰκὼν. The εἰκὼν is the physical representation of the μορφῇ, while

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<sup>1</sup>Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, pp. 79-80.

<sup>2</sup>See supra, pp. 79ff.



the μορφή is the actual outward appearance of the object which the icon represents. Although nothing is mentioned regarding the glory of God, a Jew like Josephus, schooled in the Old Testament, undoubtedly would have understood God's "form and magnitude" as related to the glory of his appearance. The connection between outward appearance (μορφή) and glory is stated explicitly in Philo. Commenting on Moses' experience at the burning bush, Philo says:

In the midst of the flame was a form (μορφή) of the fairest beauty, unlike any visible object, an image (ἄγαλμα) supremely divine in appearance, refulgent with a light brighter than the light of fire. It might be supposed that this was the image (εἰκόνα) of Him that is; but let us rather call it an angel or herald. (Vita Mosis I, 66).

Philo, in his customary fashion, hesitates to call the figure in the bush, God, but the encounter has all the overtones of a theophany. The μορφή is exactly equivalent to "an image supremely divine in appearance," and the characterization of this divine image as "refulgent with a light brighter than the light of fire" refers to the divine glory which was traditionally understood as brilliant light.

That Paul himself understood a connection to exist between the outward appearance of Christ and divine glory is confirmed by another passage in Philippians, Phil. 3.21. Speaking of the fervent hope of the Christian in the eschatological appearing of Christ, Paul alludes to the transformation Christ will perform on the believer: "He will transform the body of our humiliation to conform (σύμμορφον) to the body of his glory (δόξης) according to the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself." The relationship of this verse to Phil. 2.6-11 has already been mentioned. The important factor in the present context is the connection between the μορφή idea (contained in σύμμορφον) and glory. Paul believed that in the resurrection the Christian would share the form, the outward appearance, of the glorious body of Christ, the resurrected one (cf. Rom. 8.29-30). Thus a close connection exists between glory and the form of Christ's appearance in the resurrection. This in turn lends support to our contention that the pre-existence of Christ "in the form of God" is related to his possession of God's glory in Phil. 2.6.

In summary, the difficult expression ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων of Phil. 2.6 may be explained adequately if μορφή is understood in terms of outward appearance. Christ, as pre-existent Son of God, resembled his Father's external likeness. That is to say, his

appearance was characterized by divine glory.<sup>1</sup> Some such rendering is necessary if a genuine contrast is to be preserved between ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων and μορφῇ δούλου λαβών in vs. 7. The exact nature of this contrast will become clear when vs. 7 is examined.

c. "He Did Not Consider Equality  
With God a Thing to be Grasped"

No less troublesome than the first phrase of vs. 6 are the words οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ. The complexities of the debate concerning the meaning of οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο and the uncertainty regarding its meaning make it more profitable to begin with the words τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ in anticipation that a sound explanation of these words may help in explicating the problematic first part of vs. 6b.<sup>2</sup> The expression "to be equal with God" poses two interrelated questions: 1) To what does "being equal with God" refer? 2) Did Christ possess it before becoming a man? Grammatically ἴσα is a predicate adverb used adjectivally.<sup>3</sup> The fact that ἴσον (a masculine, accusative, singular adjective) is not employed suggests that "being equal with God" does not denote an equality of persons,<sup>4</sup> but, in the words of R.P. Martin, it "should be understood dynamically as the exercise of an office, the office of Lord."<sup>5</sup> To this should be added the suggestion of J.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. J. Behm, "μορφῇ. κτλ." TDNT 4, p. 751 who claims, "The μορφῇ θεοῦ in which the pre-existent Christ was is simply the divine δόξα."

<sup>2</sup>On the significance of τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ for determining the expression around it see G. Stählin, "ἴσος," TDNT 3, p. 353.

<sup>3</sup>Blass-Debrunner-Funk, sect 434, no. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Lightfoot, Philippians, pp. 111-112. Lightfoot thinks that ἴσα refers to the "attributes" of deity, but this implies too much. To talk about Divine attributes is simply another way of discussing the divine nature, but this does not seem to be what Paul has in mind in light of the thought of the passage. In fact, as we shall show, Paul did not believe that Christ possessed the same "attributes" as the Father, if one means by attributes such things as authority and power to rule and the right to universal homage.

<sup>5</sup>Martin, Carmen Christi, p. 151 who is following the lead of Lohmeyer, Käsemann, and Cullmann.



Gnilka that ἴσα also speaks of "der gottgleichen Würdestellung."<sup>1</sup>

The second question posed above is frequently answered in the affirmative but on dubious grounds such as dogmatic considerations,<sup>2</sup> appeals to Hellenistic religious language and thought,<sup>3</sup> or by assuming the μορφή in vs. 6a refers to divine nature.<sup>4</sup> The interpretation suggested above for μορφή does not force the conclusion that Christ possessed divine equality in his pre-existence; if anything it indicates the opposite. A son only gains equality of power, authority, and dignity with his father when he obtains his inheritance or when the father chooses to share his prerogatives with him. Paul apparently thought this human model operated on the divine plane as well. Employing the Father-Son language in 1 Cor. 15.24-28, Paul maintains that Christ's universal sovereignty derives from the Father and that ultimately the Son shall be subject to the Father, when he returns his present sovereignty to God. The subordinationist character of this passage demonstrates quite clearly that Paul did not believe in Christ's absolute equality with God, the Father.<sup>5</sup> Both Rom. 1.3-4 and 14.9 imply that Christ's sovereignty over all things is a post-resurrection phenomenon, and, as we shall see, this is the point of Phil. 2.9-11, though this latter passage also includes the idea of worship directed towards the Son of God.

Once it is recognized that for Paul Christ did not possess equality with God in an absolute sense, for the very reason that he was Son of God, the meaning of the problematic expression οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο becomes clear. Every interpretation which assumes

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<sup>1</sup>Gnilka, Philippenerbrief, p. 117. He maintains: "ἴσα ist als adverbialer Akkusativ anzusprechen. Diese adverbiale Form ἴσα gibt der Aussage etwa gegenüber dem Adjektiv ἴσος eine besondere Note. Denn sie spricht nicht von der Eigenschaft der Göttlichkeit, sondern von der gottgleichen Würdestellung."

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Lightfoot, Philippians, pp. 111-112 and T.F. Glasson, "Two Notes on the Philippian Hymn (II.6-11)," NTS 21 (1971-72), p. 137.

<sup>3</sup>E.g. Stählin, "ἴσος," p. 353 and Käsemann, "Philippians 2:6-11," pp. 261ff.

<sup>4</sup>E.g. Beare, Philippians, p. 80. It should also be noted that the meaning of 'being equal with God' is often predetermined by the conclusion one comes to concerning ἁρπαγμός. If it is understood as res rapta, then "being equal with God" must concern a pre-existent possession of Christ. Cf. Hoover, "Harpagmos," pp. 118-119.

<sup>5</sup>1 Cor. 15.24-28 will be discussed in detail later.

the essential equality of Christ with God is excluded.<sup>1</sup> In spite of certain difficulties, the sense of οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο must lie in the direction of res rapienda: the Son of God did not think equality with God something to be grasped. This statement may imply a contrast with the behavior of Adam or even the figure of Isa. 14.12ff., but it is impossible to say for certain.<sup>2</sup> From Paul's perspective, vs. 6b acknowledges that Christ accepted his position of subordination to God in function and dignity without ever trying to establish his own independence vis-à-vis his Father.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Phil. 2.7-8.

Having determined the meaning of vs. 6, the thought of much of the rest of the passage falls into place. The words ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών form an antithesis with the entire first clause, as the contrastive conjunction ἀλλά indicates. Thus an a b b' a' pattern is presented. "Being in the form of God" contrasts with the expression "taking the form of a servant," just as "he did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped" contrasts with "he emptied himself." Vs. 7ab refers to the incarna-

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<sup>1</sup>Moule, "Philippians 2:5-11," p. 267 offers a decisive criticism against those who hold a res rapta interpretation: "Whatever appropriateness to the context it [a res rapta interpretation] may have is derived from that . . . quite arbitrary addition to the meaning—namely, 'not to be let go of.' What is meant by the exegetes who adopt it is really not res rapta (which ἄρπαγμός might conceivably mean) but res retinenda—a desirable thing which is to be clung to; and it is questionable whether this sense of retaining inheres in ἄρπαγμός at all." Moule's own view which takes ἄρπαγμός abstractly (or actively) to mean the act of grasping and then interprets vs. 6b to say, "he did not regard equality with God as consisting in snatching," fails because he is forced to argue that paradoxically humiliation is exaltation, pp. 273-274. But this makes vss. 9-11 superfluous. Those like Glasson, "Philippians Hymn," pp. 133-137 and Hoover, "Harpagmos," pp. 95ff. who argue that οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο is an idiom invariably assume that "being equal with God" is a present possession without considering the evidence to the contrary.

<sup>2</sup>It is not impossible that the hymn was polemical in intent, defending Christ against Jewish claims that he had usurped the function and prerogatives of God. If this were the case, the hymn would be saying that quite the contrary, Christ did not usurp equality with God but that he received it as a gift on the basis of his obedient self-sacrifice.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Martin, Carmen Christi, p. 152.



tion of the Son of God,<sup>1</sup> but its meaning is determined by the meaning of vs. 6ab. The verb *κενῶν* requires an object to be expressed which is understood. Those who believe that Christ possessed equality with God in his pre-existence naturally urge that Christ emptied himself of his equality. This possibility, however, is ruled out by our explanation of vs. 6. Christ emptied himself of his right to be served, his privileged position as Son of God, and his visible glory by taking the form of a servant.<sup>2</sup> Thus he not only did not consider being equal with God something to be grasped, but he emptied himself of the very characteristics which marked him off as the Son of God (cf. 2 Cor. 8.9).<sup>3</sup> The contrast between vs. 6a and vs. 7b concerns the fact that the Son of God, the one being in the form of God, that is to say having the appearance of God, took the role of a slave towards God and his will (cf. Gal. 1.4). Instead of manifesting his divine glory he laid it aside in order to assume the appearance of one whose task is to serve God without any rights or privileges of his own.<sup>4</sup>

Paul believed that God had sent his Son into the world (Rom. 8.3; Gal. 4.4-5), but he also believed that the pre-existent Son chose to become a man, making himself a slave to the will of God, an act of supreme self-abnegation (cf. Rom. 15.3, 2 Cor. 8.9). Paul in all probability understood the participle *γενόμενος* in the same sense as the *γενόμενος* of Rom. 1.3 and Gal. 4.4. In both these passages *γενόμενος* denotes the birth of the Son of God as a man.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Hofius, *Christushymnus*, p. 60 who asserts that "he emptied himself" "nicht ausschliesslich auf die Menschwerdung Christi bezogen werden" but "auf den Weg, der mit der Inkarnation anhebt und im Kreuzestod sein Ziel hat."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Gnllka, *Philipperbrief*, p. 118 who is correct when he says the basal significance of "he emptied himself" is "er gab auf, was er besass."

<sup>3</sup>"In the form of God" and "taking the form of a servant" alludes to the contrast between being a Son and being a servant. Christ was the Son of God who took the role of a servant (or slave) willingly.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Moule, "Philippians 2:5-11," p. 268 and K.H. Rengstorf, "δοῦλος κτλ.," *TDNT* 2, p. 278, though he is incorrect in his contention that Christ surrendered his equality with God in becoming incarnate. In our view, the taking of the form of a servant does not allude to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 nor to Christ's subjection to astral powers (cf. Gnllka, *Philipperbrief*, pp. 117-118).

The words ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων are somewhat more difficult. In Rom. 8.3 ὁμοίωμα appears to protect the Son of God from complete identification with sinful flesh owing to Paul's view that flesh only becomes sinful through sinning. Because Christ did not sin, his flesh only gave the appearance of sinful flesh. Käsemann utilizes a similar explanation of ὁμοίωμα in Rom. 8.3 to maintain that in Phil. 2.7 "ὁμοίωμα seems to leave a margin" for asserting the reason why Christ "acted differently from other men."<sup>1</sup> For someone arguing for the pre-Pauline origin of the passage, as Käsemann does, Pauline usage can hardly be determinative, though it might serve as a pointer. Even if Paul were the author of the piece, the very difference in expression between Rom. 8.3 "likeness of sinful flesh" and Phil. 2.7 "likeness of men" should caution against the assumption of identical connotations without careful attention to the matter. An analogous usage of ὁμοίωμα in Phil. 2.7 to Rom. 8.3 would suggest that ὁμοίωμα protects Christ from identification with humanity in general since the Philippian's passage makes no reference to the sinfulness of humanity. Because the next line, "καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος" concerns his actual human existence, the prepositional phrase ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων may refer to Christ's actual birth. The possible ambiguity of ὁμοίωμα (similar to, but not identical with) might be taken as an allusion to the virgin conception, but no other evidence exists from this period to indicate that it was a well-known or widely held idea. Perhaps ὁμοίωμα was chosen because Christ's birth differed from other men's to the extent that he, unlike any other man, had pre-existed with God before his birth. Apart from this possibility, the words "born in the likeness of men" may simply mean that Christ became a man in the same way that all other humans have, through being born of a woman (cf. Gal. 4.4).<sup>2</sup>

The word σχῆμα denotes primarily, if not exclusively, the outward appearance which is observable to the human eye. Thus the statement "καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος" indicates that to all

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, "Philippians 2:5-11," p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Beare, Philippians, p. 83 who notes that "Being made in the likeness of men should perhaps be taken in the sense, 'being born into this world as all men are born,' as in Galatians iv.4;" and Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 210.



appearances the Jesus of history was a man, like any other man.<sup>1</sup>

The self-emptying of the pre-existent Son of God in order to take the form of a servant, becoming a human being with all of the attendant limitations, did not end the self-abasement of the Son. As a man he humbled himself by becoming obedient even to the death of the cross. Behind this statement stands the fact that even as a man Christ was undeserving of the cruel form of death that he suffered. In fact, if death is the wage of sin (Rom. 6.23) and it comes to all men because they sin (Rom. 5.12), then Christ, who was without sin (2 Cor. 5.21), stood outside the legitimate rule of death. Death only had power over Christ because he humbled himself, even as a man; he, who did not deserve death, abnegated his final prerogative in becoming obedient to death, and at that, the cruelest form of death known to man.

The first half of Phil. 2.6-11 ends on what is the hallmark of Paul's theology, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In a series of Sonship passages which remain to be examined, the apostle connects the Sonship of Christ with his death and its reconciling and saving power (cf. Rom. 5.10; 8.32; Gal. 2.20; Col. 1.13-14). As we have seen and shall see again, for Paul the very power of the death of Christ to save men rests on the fact that it was the Son of God who died on the cross. Phil. 2.8 does not spell out the saving significance of the cross, rather it presupposes it. But vss. 6-8 make unmistakably clear that the one who died on the cross was none other than the Son of God who had emptied himself in order to become a man and had then completely abased himself in becoming obedient to the death of the cross.

#### 4. Phil. 2.9-11

The Son's self-abnegation could go no further than the cross. But because of this complete self-giving of the Son, God exalted him. The inferential conjunction  $\delta\iota\omicron$  in vs. 9 shows that Christ's exaltation is a consequence of all that he had done. The key word in

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<sup>1</sup>J. Schneider, "σχήμα, μετασχηματίζω," TDNT 7, p. 956 maintains concerning Phil. 2.8a: "There is special stress on the fact that throughout His life, even to his death on the cross, Jesus was in the humanity demonstrated by His earthly form. The σχῆμα expresses the truth that this fact could be seen by anybody." That Paul intended this as an ontological statement of Christ's humanity, as Schneider seems to maintain a little further on, is doubtful.

vs. 9a is the verb ὑπερύψωσεν. The verb does not appear in Greek writers before the Christian period, but it does occur in the LXX thirty-nine times, though thirty-seven of these are in Daniel. Murphy-O'Connor argues that the ὑπέρ- prefix may have its comparative force in vs. 9 (cf. LXX Ps. 96.9) against much of the prevailing exegesis.<sup>1</sup> The final decision rests not on philological considerations but on the context of the piece and Pauline thought as a whole. Did God simply honor Christ by returning him to his pre-existent state? Or did God give him a new position of honor? The key to this problem is contained in the remainder of Phil. 2.6-11 when seen against the backdrop of related assertions by Paul.

The second half of vs. 9 declares that God has given to Christ "a name above every name." The particular name given is not the issue. It is a matter of rank or dignity, a way of expressing his universal sovereignty vis-à-vis every other person or power, with the obvious exception of the Father himself (cf. 1 Cor. 15.27-28).<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the exaltation and granting of the superior name is to make compulsory the worship of Jesus Christ as Lord. Both the bending of the knee and the confession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ constitute acts of worship directed towards the one exalted by God.

Vss. 10-11 clearly draw on Is. 45.23 for the wording "πάν γόνυ κάμψῃ" and "πάντα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται," thereby ascribing to Jesus Christ the worship owed to God.<sup>3</sup> The hymn concludes by main-

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<sup>1</sup>Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology," pp. 46-47. Murphy-O'Connor attacks Cullmann for holding that Christ was divine in his pre-existent state but that he did not possess sovereignty. (The position we hold.) He reasons, "If Christ in his pre-existent state had no sovereignty he cannot be the highest form of being [that is divine] that it is possible to conceive." Murphy-O'Connor overlooks the fact that Christ's lack of equality with God in his pre-existence is based on his subordinate position as the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the excellent remarks by Lightfoot, Philippians, pp. 114-115. Martin, Carmen Christi, p. 245 says of the name bestowed: "There is now general agreement that this is to be understood in terms of Kyrios. Admittedly, the precise content is not given and the identification is not explicitly made, but it harmonizes with the drift of the passage that God gives to his obedient Son His own preëminent title; and this is endorsed by verse 11." He goes on to claim, "The name of Kyrios involves divine equality, for it authorizes Jesus to act in the capacity of God vis-à-vis the world, to receive the rightful obeisance of all created powers and to share the throne of the universe" (p. 246).

<sup>3</sup>Hofius, Christushymnus, pp. 41-55 demonstrates that the background of Phil. 2.9-11 is "die Erwartung der universalen eschatolog-



taining that the worship given to Christ (or to be given in the future) which belongs properly to God, contributes to the glory of God the Father. The mention of the Fatherhood of God reinforces our contention that this text concerns the Son of God. As was noted above, worship given to Christ glorifies God precisely because he is the Son of God, and therefore honor and worship bestowed on him redound to his Father. The actual worship of Christ as Lord reflects his position of universal sovereignty. Paul undoubtedly understood this in terms of such statements of his own as 1 Cor. 15.24-28 and Rom. 14.9. 1 Cor. 15.24-28 declares that all rule, authority, and power will be subject to the sovereignty of the Son of God by the Father himself, while Rom. 14.9 confirms that the risen Christ is Lord (κυριεύσει) of both the living and the dead.

Phil. 2.9b-11, 1 Cor. 15.24-28, and Rom. 14.9 (cf. Rom. 1.3-4) imply that the ὑπερυψοῦν of Phil. 2.9a should be interpreted as meaning that the Son of God has been elevated to a dignity and authority beyond that which he possessed before his incarnation.<sup>1</sup> God the Father has made him equal in dignity and authority to himself, allowing him to be worshipped with the worship that naturally belongs to the Father himself. In this way the equality which the pre-existent Son refused to grasp at (vs. 6) is bestowed by the Father in honor of his self-giving for others.

Although we have found cause to challenge the traditional background of the sending idea as proposed by E. Schweizer and have also found reason to doubt the widely accepted conception of a pre-Pauline Christian sending formula, we have discovered that the sending of the Son of God into human existence played a vital role in the Christological and soteriological thought of the apostle Paul. Through our study of Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4 it has become clear that Christ's Sonship relationship with God was of fundamental importance for Paul in explaining how God could act in a unique way in Jesus Christ to bring the possibility of salvation to all men. Christ, as God's Son, became God's agent in effecting salvation.

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ischen Huldigung vor Jahwe."

<sup>1</sup>Cf. G. Bertram, "ὕψω κτλ.," TDNT 9, pp. 608-609; Cullmann, Christology, pp. 177-180; Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 245-246; Bornkamm, "Philippians 2.6-11," pp. 114, 117; and Bruce, Paul, p. 116.

As the Son of God sent into the world to become a man, he stood on God's side in the struggle against sin and its power. Because he was God's obedient Son, he was the one man who did not need redemption and therefore could serve as God's agent in redeeming all other men.

The theme of the coming of the Son of God into the world, an idea related to the sending concept, was found in Phil. 2.6-11, even though the term "Son" does not occur. This is so because Sonship is not so much related to a title of honor in Paul, as a matter of Christ's relationship to God. Paul's description of Christ as the one who pre-existed in the form of God is another way of indicating Christ's Sonship relation with God. In Phil. 2.6-11 the emphasis is not on the saving significance of the pre-existent Son's entrance into the human condition and upon his saving death, but upon his obedience and his willing acceptance of humiliation even unto death in order that God might exalt him. Because of his obedience, Christ, who pre-existed with God and in the form of God, as God's Son, received from his Father equality in the sense of the right to divine sovereignty and worship as a reward for his self-giving. Thus Christ's present Lordship must be seen against the backdrop of his Sonship relation to God, just as in Rom. 1.3-4 and 1 Cor. 15.24-28.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE SAVING DEATH OF THE SON OF GOD

Two of the texts we examined in the last chapter, Gal. 4.4-5 and Rom. 8.3-4, emphasized the soteriological goal of God's sending of his Son into human existence. Phil. 2.6-11 alludes to the saving significance of Christ's entry into human existence through the references to his death on the cross in vs. 8, but Paul seems to have been interested in another theme, the humiliation and exaltation motif, when he introduced Phil. 2.6-11 into the letter.

The saving significance of the death of the Son of God is made explicit in three texts and a fourth assumes his death in declaring the salvation brought by the Son of God. J. Blank has appropriately referred to such texts in terms of the "soteriologische Horizont" of Sonship, for they reflect Paul's belief that the unique Son of God died on the cross in order to effect God's saving purposes. As we have suggested before and now shall see clearly again, the Sonship relationship of Jesus Christ to God was of fundamental importance for Paul in understanding why his (Jesus') death should have universal saving significance.

In the following pages we shall examine Gal. 2.19-20; Rom. 5.8-10; Rom. 8.32; and Col. 1.13-20 for the light they shed on Christ's divine Sonship and its connection with his saving death. In the case of Col. 1.13-20, however, we will be taken considerably beyond this theme through the connection of vss. 13-14 with vss. 15-20.

#### A. "The Son of God Who . . . Gave Himself for Me": Gal. 2.19-20

Already we have investigated two Son of God passages in Galatians, Gal. 1.16 and Gal. 4.4-5; each in its own way has revealed the fundamental importance of Christ's Sonship to the thought and theology of the Apostle Paul. Gal. 2.19-20 takes us a step further

into the mind of Paul regarding the Son of God because in it Paul opens the door of his own heart to show his own living faith in the Son of God. Albert Schweitzer long ago found in Gal. 2.19-20 a clarion statement of Paul's Christ mysticism.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not one accepts Schweitzer's understanding of Pauline mysticism,<sup>2</sup> there can be no doubt that Gal. 2.19-20 takes us deep into the personal faith which animated Paul's life and apostolic ministry. Yet it must be recognized that Paul did not pen Gal. 2.19-20 for autobiographical purposes or even to reveal his inner self to his readers; rather Paul wrote Gal. 2.19-20 in the context of a theological argument.

### 1. The Context

Within the structure of Galatians, the section 2.15-21 exercises an important role, forming a well-conceived transition from Paul's historical polemic (1.11-2.14) to his theological polemic against his Judaizing opponents (3.1-5.12).<sup>3</sup> The long debated question of whether 2.15-21 preserves Paul's response to Peter at Antioch, or whether Paul has shaped 2.15-21 with a view to the troubles in Galatia need not concern us.<sup>4</sup> The letter itself demonstrates clearly enough that 2.15-21 introduces the important themes of 3.1ff. such as "works of the law," "faith in Christ," and

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<sup>1</sup> Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul, p. 125. Cf. also Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism, p. 46 who describes Gal. 2.19ff. as a "passage of supreme importance" to the theme of Pauline mysticism.

<sup>2</sup> Recently E.P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism has attempted to rehabilitate the work of Schweitzer in offering a comprehensive explanation for the religious system of Paul.

<sup>3</sup> On the nature of Paul's opponents see infra, pp. 296-303.

<sup>4</sup> Among those favoring the view that Gal. 2.15-21 preserves very closely what Paul said to Peter at Antioch are M.-J. Lagrange, Saint Paul. Épître aux Galates (1950<sup>2</sup>), p. 46; J. Bligh, Galatians (1969), p. 190; and H. Feld, "'Christus Diener Sünde': Zum Ausgang des Streites zwischen Petrus und Paulus," Theologische Quartalschrift 153 (1957), p. 121 who maintains, "dass der Bericht des Paulus über die Ereignisse in Antiochen nicht mit Gal. 2, 14, sondern erst mit 2, 21 endet, und dass wir in 2,15 und 2,17 Zitate der Gegner des Paulus, mit grosser Wahrscheinlichkeit die Einwände des Petrus selber, von [sic] uns haben." A number of scholars, however, see Gal. 2.15-21 as directed specifically to the Galatians. These include Burton, Galatians, p. 117; Oepke, Galater, p. 87; Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 145-146; and W.G. Kümmel, "'Individualgeschichte' und 'Weltgeschichte' in Gal. 2.15-21," Christ and Spirit in the New Testament (1973), pp. 162-163.



"justification by faith," so that Berger can say with some justification, "Gal. 3 ist in erster Linie zu verstehen als ein Kommentar zu den dogmatischen Aussage in Gal. 2.15-21."<sup>1</sup> To begin with 2.15-16 offers a declaration by Paul, perhaps originally expressed to Peter at Antioch, that the justification necessary for right standing before God does not come through works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus. In the context of Paul's polemic against the Judaizers this is an important assertion because it effectively undercuts the claim (or possible inference) that obedience to the law was necessary for salvation: Not even the Jew obtains justification through works of the law; justification comes through faith in Jesus Christ. In 2.17 Paul interjects a question which might be raised against his position: "If we Jewish Christians, while seeking to be justified in Christ (by faith) were ourselves found to be sinners (against the law like the Gentiles), is Christ then a minister of sin (for justifying sinful behavior)?<sup>2</sup> The dilemma posed by vs. 17 is in reality a false problem because the premise is incorrect according to what Paul says in vs. 19. The believer has died to the law, through the law, so he cannot possibly be a sinner in the sense of vs. 17, hence the emphatic denial (μὴ γένοιτο) that Christ might be a minister of sin. In vs. 18 Paul may have the behavior of Peter at Antioch in mind, but this verse has immediate relevance for the problem of the Galatians as well. It is not clear what ἄ and ταῦτα

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<sup>1</sup>K. Berger, "Abraham in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen," Münchener theologische Zeitschrift 17 (1966), p. 47. Cf. Schlier, Galater, pp. 87-88. Sanders, Paul, p. 493 sees Gal. 2.15-3.29 as a unified argument showing "that whatever is religiously good—righteousness, the promise of Abraham, the Spirit, life and the like—does not come by works of the law and must come another way: by faith." While this may serve as a summary of the gist of 2.15-3.29, Sanders does not take sufficient account of the possibility that Paul is responding to the clearly articulated position of his opponents and that this has resulted in the various ideas expressed in Gal. 2.15-3.29.

<sup>2</sup>On this interpretation of Christ as a minister of sin cf. Schlier, Galater, pp. 95-96 and Burton, Galatians, pp. 125-130. G. Klein, "Individualgeschichte und Weltgeschichte bei Paulus," Rekonstruktion und Interpretation (1969), p. 192 maintains, "Im Glauben an Christus werden auch Juden zu solchen, von denen sie sich bis dahin gerade als Juden, φύσει (V 15), unterschieden: zu ἁμαρτωλοί, so dass Paulus mit der Möglichkeit rechnet, dass man den Ursprung dieses Geschehens als den Ursprung der Sünde selbst, Christus als Diener der Sünde, denunziern könnte." Klein bases his view on the assumption that a separation exists between vss. 15 and 16: up until the time a Jew believes in Christ, he differs from Gentile sinners (v. 15), but when he comes to faith in order to be justified, he finds himself to be a

refer to; however, the most probable explanation is that they allude to the barriers existing between Jews and Gentiles. For Peter, or Jewish Christians, or even Paul, to rebuild a system which separated Jews and Gentiles was a transgression not against the Jewish law, but against the moral law of God.<sup>1</sup> It is at this point that the two verses which are of interest to us are inserted into the argument.

## 2. Paul and the Son of God

Behind vss. 19-20 stands Paul's understanding of what J.D.G. Dunn calls the "conversion—initiation" process,<sup>2</sup> a view confirmed by the similarity between vs. 19 and Rom. 6.3-11. But in the case of Gal. 2.19-20, Paul speaks out of his own experience of coming to faith in Christ. The first person singulars of vss. 19-20 are genuine personal references by Paul in contrast to the gnomic first persons of vs. 18. The shift to the emphatic ἐγώ in vss. 19-20, the prepositional phrases ἐν ἐμοί and ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, and the με with the phrase τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντος confirm the personal character of vss. 19-20. As E. Stauffer observes, "Paul goes beyond general discussion of possibility and truth to the decisive reality: ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω."<sup>3</sup> Paul,

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sinner (vss. 16-17a). Klein apparently understands the phrase "seeking to be justified" (vs. 17) as synonymous with "we believed in order that we might be justified" (vs. 16). It seems much more likely, however, that "seeking to be justified" refers to justification as one of the final goals of Christian existence (cf. Gal. 5.5). The separation forced by Klein between vss. 15 and 16 is non-existent. Vs. 15 is concessive with respect to the main clauses of vs. 16 (Burton, Galatians, p. 119). The point of vss. 15 and 16 is that Jews, who are not by nature Gentile sinners, are not justified by the works of the law which distinguish them from Gentile sinners but by faith. Given the context of 2.11-14 and vss. 18-21 Paul apparently has in mind living ἐθνικῶς when he speaks of being found a ἁμαρτωλός in vs. 17 (cf. vs. 15).

<sup>1</sup>Burton, Galatians, p. 131 suggests that Paul intentionally substituted παραβάτης for ἁμαρτωλοί to distinguish between violation of the ritual law and the far more heinous violation of the moral law of God. Cf. the use of παραβάτης in Rom. 2.25-29.

<sup>2</sup>J.D.G. Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit (1970), pp. 106-107 designates the whole of Gal. 2.15-21 a "conversion-initiation passage." Many other scholars recognize in vss. 19-20 a statement based on Paul's baptismal theology. Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 180-181; Oepke, Galater, p. 94; R. Schnackenburg, Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul (1964), p. 62; and Schlier, Galater, pp. 99-100.

<sup>3</sup>E. Stauffer, "ἐγώ," TDNT 2, p. 357.



however, does not see his experience as unique; rather it is typical of all genuine Christian experience.<sup>1</sup> It was at the time of his conversion that Paul died with Christ to his obligation to keep the whole Torah, and at the same time he came alive to God in Christ Jesus (cf. Rom. 6.3-11; 7.4-6). For the Galatians this assertion had unmistakable importance: if Paul, the Jew, had died to the law in order to live to God, then there could be no reason for the Gentile Galatians to try to obtain acceptance before God through obedience to the law (cf. Gal. 5.4).

Vs. 20 spells out the ramifications of Paul's claim in vs. 19 to have been crucified with Christ. The perfect συνεσταύρωμαι emphasizes the existing results of Paul's crucifixion with Christ. The fact that Paul has been crucified with Christ means that he no longer lives an independent existence in the world; instead Christ lives in him. Although Paul maintains that Christ lives in the believer on a number of occasions (cf. Rom. 8.10; 2 Cor. 13.5; Gal. 4.19; Eph. 3.17; Col. 1.27), none of these passages make explicit what this means. This is no accident. Paul cannot define the meaning of Christ in the believer because it is an experience which goes beyond words to the inner essence of the Christian's life. It is an experiential reality which shapes the believer's ethical and spiritual life (cf. Rom. 8.10; Gal. 4.19) and may ultimately have a bearing on his resurrection existence (cf. Rom. 8.29; Phil. 3.21; Col. 1.27).<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Paul knows that he still lives in the flesh. The difference is that as a Christian he lives by faith in the Son of God (Gal. 2.20b).

Paul states explicitly that the faith he lives by is faith

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 178, who urges, "Das Ich des V 18 visiert noch einmal Petrus an, das betonte ἐγώ des V 19 dagegen Paulus; beide aber sind dabei exemplarische Repräsentanten oder Typen eines bestimmten Tuns bzw. Erleidens und insofern überindividuell zu begreifen."

<sup>2</sup>Mussner, ibid., pp. 182-183, is justified in introducing the category of eschatology into the discussion of Gal. 2.20 as a comparison with Gal. 1.4 shows. He says, "Die Aussage 'Christus lebt in mir' ist also, ohne deswegen ihren ontologischen Charakter zu verlieren, eschatologisch zu verstehen! Dadurch, dass Christus, der Begründer und Grund des neuen Aons im Getauften lebt, lebt dieser selbst schon in der bereits angebrochenen Heilszukunft der Christusherrschaft und ist so dem Gesetzes—Aon entnommen."

"τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἑμοῦ" (Gal. 2.20b).<sup>1</sup> Kramer describes this as "a giving-up of the Son formula,"<sup>2</sup> while Wengst sees it as an example of a "Dahingabeformel" not restricted to the Son designation.<sup>3</sup> Both Kramer and Wengst are shooting in the dark since they simply assume the existence of a pre-Pauline "Dahingabeformel" of some type without any real evidence except for Pauline texts themselves.<sup>4</sup> In the absence of strong evidence to the contrary, the wording of Gal. 2.20b must be accepted as authentically Pauline.

Two things mark Gal. 2.20b off from other Sonship statements. First Paul specifies that it was the Son of God who loved him. Paul does not often mention the love of Christ for the believer (cf. Rom. 8.35; 2 Cor. 5.14; cf. also Eph. 3.19; 5.2). In Gal. 2.20b he not only introduces the idea, but he connects it so closely with Christ's self-giving that it becomes the apparent motive for the self-giving of the Son of God.<sup>5</sup> The fact that Paul personalizes the love of Christ in terms of himself as a believer (ἀγαπήσαντός με) indicates the strength of his religious feeling in this passage, and so does the fact that he pictures the saving activity of the Son of God in personal terms (παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἑμοῦ).

The other hallmark of this Sonship passage is that Paul describes the self-giving of the Son of God with the words παραδόντος ἑαυτόν. Already in Gal. 1.4 Paul has articulated the same basic idea when he depicts Christ as "τοῦ δόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν." The ὑπὲρ phrase demands that the participle δόντος be understood with reference to Christ's death on the cross since in primitive Christianity

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<sup>1</sup>Several early witnesses to the text of Gal. 2.20 (p<sup>46</sup> B D G etc.) read θεοῦ καὶ χριστοῦ in place of τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ. This reading is undoubtedly a corruption of the τοῦ υἱοῦ κτλ. reading because Paul nowhere else <sup>explicitly</sup> makes God the object of the Christian's faith. See B.M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (1971), p. 593.

<sup>2</sup>Kramer, Christ, p. 118. <sup>3</sup>Wengst, Christologische Formeln, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup>This is not to say that Paul originated the "Dahingabe" idea; rather we question the existence of genuine "Dahingabeformeln" prior to Paul that have then been taken over by him.

<sup>5</sup>The καί in τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἑμοῦ is virtually an explicative καί.



it was specifically the death of Jesus which had significance for men's sins (cf. Rom. 3.22-26; 1 Cor. 15.1ff.; 2 Cor. 5.21). The similarity of Gal. 2.20b with 1.4 means that the παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν of 2.20b also refers to the death of Christ, but here of course Paul specifies that the one giving himself was the Son of God. The parallelism between the two self-giving statements indicates that Paul conceived of the "on my behalf" of 2.20b in terms of at least two interrelated things: the Son of God gave himself to remove Paul's sins in order to save him from the present evil age (Gal. 1.4). The verse immediately following 2.20b implies a further dimension of Paul's understanding concerning the death of the Son of God for him. In 2.21 he says, "If righteousness came through the law then Christ died in vain." The implication is clear. Christ's death as Son of God effected the possibility of Paul attaining righteousness.<sup>1</sup> As Paul declares in Rom. 3.24, "All who are being justified are, as a gift by God's grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" that is, in his death (cf. Rom. 5.9). When Paul explains in Gal. 2.16 that Jewish Christians "believed in Christ in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law," he presupposes the saving significance of the death of the Son of God. At its root, it is precisely who the crucified was, that is, he was the Son of God sent into the world to accomplish God's saving purposes (cf. Gal. 4.4-5; Rom. 8.3-4), which accounts for the saving power of his death. Gal. 2.20b with its emphasis on the self-giving of the Son stands closest to Phil. 2.6-9 for there the one who is Son of God willingly enters human existence and ultimately accepts the cross.

Gal. 2.20b is no "off the cuff" remark. It attests in a most incisive way to the true character of Paul's living faith: he lived by faith in the Son of God. It was only because the one called Jesus Christ was in fact the Son of God sent into the world to redeem mankind that Paul believed in him and his power to save. The faith in the Son of God which Paul speaks of in Gal. 2.20b began for him when God revealed to him his Son on the Damascus road and the Son

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<sup>1</sup>Lührmann, *Offenbarungsverständnis*, p. 77 suggests that the title "Son of God" is the one most closely associated with justification in Paul. Although there is little evidence for this connection apart from this passage, it follows from what we have seen concerning the saving significance of the Son of God that this is probably correct (cf. esp. Rom. 8.3-4 and Rom. 5.9-10).

became the content of Paul's Gospel (Gal. 1.16).

B. "Reconciliation to God through the  
Death of His Son": Rom. 5.8-10

Unlike most of the Sonship texts examined so far, Rom. 5.8-10 has received very little scholarly attention apart from its discussion in the various commentaries on Romans, and even in these the treatment is generally brief and uncontroversial. In fact the whole of Rom. 5.1-11 has suffered a form of benign neglect, though recently a German doctoral thesis has been dedicated to the study of the passage but only as an illustration of "wie sehr die Argumentationsweise paulinischer Eschatologie von traditionellen Deutungsschemata geprägt ist."<sup>1</sup> Several reasons may be adduced for the relative lack of interest in the passage as a whole and vss. 9-10 in particular. Most of the basic themes of Rom. 5.1-11 are either developed earlier in the letter or are taken up and expounded in more detail later, especially in chapter 8. The theme of justification found in vss. 1 and 9 is based on Paul's explication of this doctrine in Rom. 3-4, and the references to salvation blessings through Christ and his death occurring in vss. 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 are elaborations on the decisive statement in 3.21-26 (cf. 4.25). The theme of hostility between God and man which occurs in vss. 9 and 10 is based on the exposition of the idea in 1.18ff., and the statements concerning reconciliation in vss. 1, 10 and 11 are not so much explicated in 5.1-11 as stated as the logical inference of 3.21-4.25. A number of other conceptions like the "hope of the glory of God," "the love of God," "the gift of the Spirit," and "eschatological salvation" receive much fuller treatment in chapter 8.<sup>2</sup> With respect to the twin themes of justification and reconciliation in vss. 9 and 10-11, the major Pauline discussions

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<sup>1</sup>See M. Wolter, Rechtfertigung und zukünftiges Heil: Untersuchungen zu Röm 5, 1-11 (1978), p. v. After mentioning the main treatments of aspects of Rom. 5.1-11, he claims, "kann innerhalb des Röm der Text 5, 1-11 als die mit Abstand am seltensten untersuchte Texteinheit gelten, und auch innerhalb des gesamten Corpus Paulinum gibt es nur sehr wenige Texte, für die Ähnliches gilt" (pp. 1-2).

<sup>2</sup>N.A. Dahl, "Two Notes on Romans 5," ST 5 (1952), pp. 37ff. has clearly demonstrated this point by presenting Rom. 5.1-11 and 8.1-39 in synopsis form.



of these terms are found elsewhere (Rom. 3-4 and Gal. 2.15-3.14 for justification and 2 Cor. 5.18-21 for reconciliation), and therefore Rom. 5.8-11 is normally only used as a further reference in expositions of these doctrines. The Sonship statement of vs. 10 has suffered neglect because, for the most part, scholars have not recognized the importance of Christ's Sonship in the total thought of Paul.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in the final analysis the dearth of scholarly interest in Rom. 5.1-11 reflects the comparatively straightforward nature of the passage which has not created serious interpretative difficulties for exegetes.<sup>2</sup> Yet from our perspective, Rom. 5.8-11 provides an important statement for understanding Paul's Sonship Christology and further confirms a key point we have argued regarding the significance of Christ's Sonship in Paul.

Rom. 5.1-11 represents an important changing point within the argument of Rom. 1-8.<sup>3</sup> In 1.18-4.25 Paul treats in great detail the themes of the righteousness of God and justification, but in 5.1-11 he begins to personalize his message by drawing out some of the implications of his previous discussion for his readers' Christian experience. The change to the first person plural of 5.1-11 reflects the more personal thrust of the section 5.1-8.39.<sup>4</sup> In Rom. 5.1 Paul presupposes the justification of the believer in Christ (δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως) and then proceeds to assert that those who are justified are at peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of which he speaks is not intellectual and emotional tranquility, but the cessation of hostility between

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<sup>1</sup>Kramer, Christ, pp. 184-185 perhaps best typifies this problem.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Wolter, Rechtfertigung, p. 2 observes, "die exegetische Literatur sich in Röm 5, 1-11 vor weitaus weniger und auch geringere Probleme gestellt sah als in jedem anderen Text des Röm: Religionsgeschichtliche, sprachliche, formal und theologisch bot dieser Text der Forschung bisher kaum Schwierigkeiten."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Dahl, "Romans 5," pp. 39-42; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 101; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 252-254; and Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 137-138. See infra, pp. 356-363 on the structure of Romans.

<sup>4</sup>The transition to the first person actually occurs in 4.23-25. As Dahl, "Romans 5," p. 40 notes: "The discussion in 1:18-4:22 is held in the third person, as a development of a thesis. The second person singular is used in a rhetorical manner. In chapters 5-8 with the exception of 5.12-21 the Apostle, on the contrary is directly addressing the Romans, writing in the second and first person plural."

God and the man who is justified (cf. vs. 10). Paul's thought moves considerably beyond the idea of peace between man and God in the course of vss. 2-11; however, the fact that he returns to this theme in vss. 10-11 indicates that this is a bracket within which the discussion of vss. 2-9 is carried out.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. The Context.

The actual thought progression of 5.2-11 is somewhat convoluted. Vs. 2 continues the thought of vs. 1 by presenting two more of the salvation blessings enjoyed by the believer through Christ: he has access to the grace of God by which he is justified and in which he stands; and he exults (καυχᾶσθαι) in the hope of the glory of God. The "hope of the glory of God" is best understood in light of Rom. 8.17ff. where the eschatological character of the hoped for glory becomes obvious, and it is also made clear that the believer expects to *share personally* in this glory (cf. Phil. 3.21 and 1 Cor. 15.43). Paul introduces what seems to be quite a different thought in vs. 3 when he interjects that believers not only exult in the hoped for glory of God, but they also exult in tribulations. At first sight it seems odd that tribulation is something to exult in, but 8.17 reveals that suffering is a pre-condition to glorification (cf. 8.18). By a series of chain connections in vss. 3 and 4 Paul maintains that tribulation is also the beginning point of a process within the individual that produces confident, well-proven hope. According to vss. 3b-4 tribulation produces patience, and patience produces character, and character brings forth hope, hope in the blessings of eschatological salvation. Paul goes on to say in vs. 5 that such hope does not disappoint or put its possessor to shame. The fact that the love of God has been poured out in the believer's heart by the Holy Spirit who was given to him proves this because it indicates that the Christian has already begun to experience the salvation blessings of God.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 255 and Wolter, Rechtfertigung, p. 195. Wolter describes 5.1, 2b-10, 11 as an "Argumentationkreis" based on the thought of peace with God.

<sup>2</sup>The possession of the Spirit is frequently seen as confirmation of salvation blessings and future salvation. Cf. Rom. 8.11, 14-16; 2 Cor. 1.22; Gal. 5.5; and Eph. 1.13-14.



In vss. 6-8 Paul attempts to offer objective evidence that the love of God has been poured out in the hearts of Christians, thereby providing a basis for confident hope in future salvation.<sup>1</sup> The first point made by Paul involves the timing of Christ's death: Christ died on behalf of the godless at the time determined by God,<sup>2</sup> while men were spiritually and morally bankrupt before God (cf. ἁμαρτωλῶν in vs. 8). That Christ actually died for the ungodly constitutes an amazing proof of God's love as Paul points out in vss. 7-8. Had Christ died for just men or good men, his death might be explicable (vs. 7), but he had not. He died for weak, godless sinners. By so doing he demonstrated God's love for men who were sinners (vs. 8) though the significance of this is obvious only through the eyes of faith.

Vs. 8 helps in understanding Paul's soteriological thought and the importance of Christ's Sonship.<sup>3</sup> The subject of the verb συνίστησιν in vs. 8 is not Christ, but God (συνίστησιν δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός). God proves his love for his people through the death of Christ. The only way in which Christ's death can "prove" God's love is if Christ has some special connection with God. Christ must in some sense stand on God's side vis-à-vis the relationship between God and man. In light of vs. 10 with its specific reference to the death of the Son of God and Rom. 8.32 with its assertion that God did not spare his own Son but gave him up for man's sake, there can be no doubt whatsoever that God's love was demonstrated for man in the death of Christ precisely because he was God's Son.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Wolter, Rechtfertigung, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 106 calls κατὰ καιρὸν "the due moment" and says, "The 'due moment' is the eschatological moment of the fulfilment of God's promises, 'when the fullness of time came' (Gal.iv.4)."

<sup>3</sup>Wolter, Rechtfertigung, p. 176 is correct to maintain that the various proposals for a formula of some kind in vs.8 are all hypothetical.

<sup>4</sup>Blank, Paulus, p. 283 is perhaps the only other scholar to have recognized this. In seeking an explanation for the appearance of the Son of God designation in vs. 10 he asks whether the context has contributed to its use. He proceeds to argue: "Dies scheint in der Tat möglich zu sein, und zwar von V.8 her: 'Gott aber hat seine Liebe dadurch herausgestellt, dass . . .'. Es war wohl der Gedanke an die göttliche Liebestat, der Paulus dazu veranlasste, in V.10 die Sohnesbezeichnung aufzugreifen. Dass der Tod des Christus der Tod des Sohnes Gottes ist, macht erst in vollem Umfang deutlich, wie gross Gottes Liebe zum heilsschwachen, gottlosen und sündigen Menschen ist."

He therefore represented God in a totally unique way so that his death proved "costly" for God in a way that nothing else could have. In the words of another passage from Romans, God sent his own Son into human existence on account of sin (Rom. 8.3). It is this act, conceived as the total Christ-event, which demonstrates God's love for man.

## 2. Rom. 5.9-10

Vss. 9 and 10 return to the thought of vs. 5a in an attempt to provide further support for the claim that hope in God's eschatological salvation does not disappoint.<sup>1</sup> Both verses set forth a fortiori arguments (πολλῷ μᾶλλον) designed to assure Paul's readers that they will have a share in eschatological salvation.

In vs. 9 Paul reasons from the presently existing state of justification for believers (δικαιωθέντες νῦν), which comes by means of the blood of Christ, to future salvation from the wrath of God through Christ. He is able to assume the reality of justification from his discussion in chapters 3 and 4, and in fact the words "having now been justified by his blood," recall quite emphatically 3.24-26 where it mentions, among other things, "those who are being justified . . . through the redemption in Christ Jesus whom God put forward (or purposed) as a propitiation by his blood." The ὀργή from which Christians will be saved is the wrath of God that will be unleashed against all unrighteousness "in the day of wrath (ὀργῆς) even the day of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2.5). The logic of the a fortiori argument is clear: if God has already justified those who believe in Christ (cf. 3.26) by means of Christ's death, then he also will save them from the wrath of his judgment through Christ.<sup>2</sup> This is particularly true since righteousness is the very requirement necessary to stand in the presence of God, and God, through justification, has granted this status to those who believe in Christ.

Although the "Son of God" designation does not occur in vs. 9, several factors suggest that it was in Paul's mind. In the first

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<sup>1</sup>The οὖν of vs. 9 actually connects the verse with the ὅτι clause of vs. 8, though Paul's thought clearly returns to demonstrating the truth of vs. 5a.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Wolter, Rechtfertigung, p. 191.



place, as H. Schlier points out, the words "by his blood" in vs. 9 and "through the death of his Son" in vs. 10 are parallel.<sup>1</sup> Thus F.J. Leenhardt is correct to recognize an implicit reference to the Son of God in vs. 9a, and to maintain that it is actually the death of the Son of God, the one who stands closest to God, which confirms the promise of God in vs. 9.<sup>2</sup> A very different consideration leads to the conclusion that vs. 9b has its own connection to Paul's Sonship thought. Wolter argues with considerable force that in concept Rom. 5.9 is closely related to 1 Thess. 1.10.<sup>3</sup> If this is correct, it may help explain why Paul says in Rom. 5.9, "We shall be saved through him from wrath." According to 1 Thess. 1.10, a passage we shall examine in more detail later, Paul taught his converts that God's Son, Jesus, was coming from heaven and that he would save them (σωόμενος) from the coming wrath. Paul intends the allusion to Christ's divine Sonship here to give his readers confidence that they will be saved from God's wrath because they have the protection of the one closest to God, his Son. Paul's assertion in Rom. 5.9b probably rests on the same conviction. The Sonship "context" of Rom. 5.8, 9a, and 10 lends strong support to this conclusion.

The a fortiori of vs. 10 moves from the premise that if men were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, while they were still enemies of God, how much more likely it is that they will be saved by the Son's life. Vs. 10 picks up the idea of vs. 1. Reconciliation is the basis of the peace now existing between God and man.<sup>4</sup> In turn, reconciliation is based on the death of God's Son. The sense in which the death of the Son of God opens up the possibility of reconciliation to God is not clear from vs. 10,

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<sup>1</sup>Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup>Leenhardt, Romans, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup>Wolter, Rechtfertigung, p. 189.

<sup>4</sup>For valuable discussions concerning reconciliation in Paul see Morris, Apostolic Preaching, pp. 198-210; Wolter, Rechtfertigung, pp. 35-89; and T.W. Manson, On Paul and John (1963), pp. 50-54. Manson (p. 51) makes the important observation: "With reference to the relation between God and man Paul alone uses the word in the New Testament and he uses καταλλάσσειν only of God, καταλλαγῆναι only of man. This is a complete reversal of the Jewish usage. In Judaism God is reconciled to man: in Christianity man is reconciled to God. . . . The reconciliation is thus a one-sided transaction. God reconciles; man is reconciled. It is not even a mutual affair, much less a reconciliation of God by man for man."

but 2 Cor. 5.18-21, and Rom. 3.24-26, passages already examined with regard to the Sonship theme, point to the solution. Men's sin and rebellion alienate them from God and leave them the objects of God's wrath (cf. Rom. 1.18ff.), but God reconciles men to himself (2 Cor. 5.18) through the atoning power of the death of his own Son who was without sin (2 Cor. 5.21 and Rom. 3.25). This renders the exact difference between justification and reconciliation not altogether clear. Many simply think that they are two different ways of talking about the same thing;<sup>1</sup> however, the thought of reconciliation seems to go a step beyond that of justification.<sup>2</sup> Justification connotes a legal standing before God. Reconciliation, on the other hand, implies an end of hostilities and a return to genuine friendship: God's love is poured out in the hearts of those who have been reconciled to him (Rom. 5.5). Thus God's love, and not his righteousness, characterizes the essential aspect of reconciliation.

Paul's choice of the Sonship designation in Rom. 5.10a corresponds with the inner dynamic of his theology. W. Kramer misses this point completely when he finds little importance in the Son of God appellation in Rom. 5.10. He operates on the mistaken assumption that "Son of God" is merely a title here and that as a title, it has no clear-cut function.<sup>3</sup> In truth, whether Paul had used the term "his Son" or not in Rom. 5.10, it would not have mattered. For just as with Rom. 5.8 (and probably 5.9b) the thought expressed presupposes Christ's Sonship. In the words of J. Blank, reconciliation "durch den Sohn," durch Christus geschah, also durch den, der selbst bereits in der Nähe Gottes stand und deshalb auch keiner

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 108 and Käsemann, Römer, p. 129. Käsemann lists a number of others accepting this view, as well as others who do not.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 256-257 and F. Büchsel, "ἀλλάσσω κτλ.," TDNT 1, pp. 255-256.

<sup>3</sup>Kramer, Christ, pp. 184-185. Given the fact that none of the major commentaries we have examined on Rom. 5.10 show any particular interest in the Sonship designation, we can only assume that the general view of Kramer is widespread. No more acceptable than Kramer's views are those of Loader, "Apocalyptic Sonship," p. 534 who thinks that here, as in Rom. 8.32, the Sonship appellation was conditioned by the allusion to future deliverance. He ignores the fact that in both Rom. 5.10 and 8.32 the death of the Son is specifically in view and calls forth the Sonship terminology.



Versöhnung bedurft."<sup>1</sup> The reference to Christ as the Son of God underscores the personal relationship between God and the one who brings the blessings of salvation through his own death. Reconciliation resulted from God's initiative in sending his own Son to atone for man's sin when man could not do it for himself (cf. Rom. 8.3). Without recourse to the idea of Christ's unique Sonship relation with God, it is impossible to account for the very heart of the apostle Paul's understanding of the once and for all times valid salvation act in Christ.

When Paul continues by saying in vs. 10b, "We shall be saved by his life," he means the resurrection life of the one who is Son. The Son of God who was sent into the world by God (Rom. 8.3; Gal. 4.4) and who died as the Son of God (Gal. 2.20; Rom. 5.10; 8.32), now lives as the Son of God, the first-born among many brethren (Rom. 8.29) and reigns as the Son of God (1 Cor. 15.24-28; Col. 1.13-14). Therefore the Son of God may be relied upon to save those who believe in him. The Son who died to reconcile men to his Father, now lives to complete their salvation at the eschaton when they shall experience the redemption of their bodies (Rom. 8.23).

C. "God Did Not Spare His Own  
Son . . .": Rom. 8.32

The Sonship statement of Rom. 8.32 occurs within Paul's moving conclusion to his discussion in Rom. 5-8. The whole paragraph, 8.31-39, has aroused a good deal of interest among scholars in recent years because the elevated style of the passage has made it fertile ground for the posing of form-critical questions.<sup>2</sup> The possible presence of traditional fragments has also attracted attention.<sup>3</sup> To examine these matters with regard to the whole paragraph would take us too far afield. The form

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<sup>1</sup>Blank, Paulus, p. 285. Blank seems to be the only other scholar to have comprehended the significance of the Sonship statement in Rom. 5.10 for the theological outlook of Paul.

<sup>2</sup>See Paulsen, Römer 8, pp. 135-151; Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 28-35; and Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 166ff. and the literature cited by them.

<sup>3</sup>See. G. Schille, "Die Liebe Gottes in Christus," ZNW 59 (1968), pp. 230-244; Wengst, Christologische Formeln, pp. 47, 55ff.; Paulsen, Römer 8, pp. 152-175, and Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 35-46.

critical possibilities do not much matter for interpreting the meaning of the text from the apostle Paul's viewpoint, and the extent to which vs. 32 or even vss. 32-34 embody traditional formulations remains a moot point among exegetes.<sup>1</sup> As we have urged on other occasions, exegesis must begin with the text as it stands.

The thought of vss. 31ff. not only provides a fitting conclusion to the discussion of the Christian's hope in God's eschatological salvation blessings as expounded in 8.17-30, but it also recalls 5.1-11 where Paul first introduced the theme of confident hope in God's future salvation based on God's past saving acts. Thus the initial rhetorical question of 8.31, "What then shall we say to these things?" refers not just to the immediate context in chapter 8, but at least as far back as Rom. 5, and perhaps even includes the whole of Rom. 1-8.<sup>2</sup> The connection of 8.31-39 with 5.1-11, and more especially with 5.5-10, is particularly interesting since Paul takes up Christ's Sonship relationship with God in 8.32 reminding his readers of what God has done in Christ in order to assure them of his future benevolence towards them: "ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο, ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν, πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται?"

The expression τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο of vs. 32 is often said to be a verbal allusion to Gen. 22.16: "οὐκ ἐφείσω τοῦ υἱοῦ σου τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ δι' ἐμέ." Gen. 22.16, as is well-known, forms part of the conclusion to the 'aqedah or binding of Isaac story. If the allusion is intentional, it raises the question of its purpose. The answer cannot be ascertained from Rom. 8.32 itself. H.J. Schoeps, among others, has argued that Paul's concept of the atonement through Christ's death derives largely from speculation on the 'aqedah of Isaac.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, Römer, p. 236 warns with regard to the presence of "Bekenntnisfragmente" in 8.32-34: "Diese Einsicht ist allerdings nicht zu übertreiben, als läge hier geläufiges Kerygma in paulinischer Prägung vor."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 434-435.

<sup>3</sup>Schoeps, Paul, pp. 141-149. Cf. G. Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism (1961), pp. 195-227. For further literature on this theme see N.A. Dahl, "The Atonement—An Adequate Reward for the Akedah? (Ro 8:32)," Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honour of Matthew Black (1969), pp. 15-16.



This view stumbles on the text of the New Testament because, as N.A. Dahl acknowledges, "The few explicit references to the sacrifice of Isaac do not deal with the Atonement, and passages that deal with the Atonement may be more or less reminiscent of the Akedah but never make the allusion explicit."<sup>1</sup> Dahl proposes a different approach to the problem. He claims that "the redemption by Christ was seen as an adequate reward for the binding of Isaac" in early Christian thought and that Rom. 8.32a may have originated in a homiletic exposition or paraphrase of this.<sup>2</sup> His argument for this hypothesis is very stimulating, but in the end it remains little more than a conjecture. Certainly Paul does not attempt any explicit correlation between Christ's death and the binding of Isaac or for that matter between God offering up his Son and Abraham's similar act (which would have to be the point of Rom. 8.32).<sup>3</sup> The lack of such connections and the fact that the verbal similarities between Rom. 8.32 and Gen. 22.16 are confined to the noun υἱός and the verb φείδεσθαι,<sup>4</sup> which Paul uses on five other occasions (cf. Rom. 11.21; 1 Cor. 7.28; 2 Cor. 1.23; 12.6; 13.4), may indicate that Paul was only subconsciously influenced by Gen. 22.16, rather than that he consciously sought to allude to it.

As in Rom. 5.8-10, that God did not spare his own Son but gave him for the sake of men attests the profound love of God for humanity and gives assurance of future salvation. The verb παραδοῦναι, in conformity with its usage in Rom. 4.25 and Gal. 2.20, refers to God giving his Son up to death on behalf of mankind.<sup>5</sup> Paul's description of the Son as God's ἰδιος takes on special significance coming at the conclusion of chapter 8 since he argues that all those who are lead by the Spirit are sons of God (vs. 14).

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 16. (The quotation is from p. 29.)

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Professor Barrett, From First Adam to Last (1962), pp. 26-30; and A.T. Hanson, Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology (1974), pp. 79-86.

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the ἰδιος of Rom. 8.32 might represent the ἀγαπητός of Gen. 22.16.

<sup>5</sup> See Paulsen, Römer 8, p. 164 concerning the possible allusion to Is. 53.6 LXX in Rom. 8.32b. The ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν phrase is quite commonly associated with the saving death of Christ cf. Rom. 5.8; 14.15; 1 Cor. 1.13; 11.24; 15.3; Gal. 2.20; and 3.13.

They are adopted sons, however (vs. 15). The Son whom God did not spare but handed over to death was his unique Son through whom the other sons received their adoption (Gal. 4.4-5). The words τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ identify Christ, who brought salvation for mankind, with God in the closest possible way. As we have seen, he was the one who existed with God and was sent by God into human existence for the purpose of effecting salvation. God's refusal to spare his own Son from suffering and death demonstrates his total commitment to man's redemption. It also confirms our contention that Christ's unique Sonship relation with God was foundational for Paul's soteriological thought. The man Jesus who died on a Roman cross was at the same time more than man; he was the Son of God who represented God uniquely in effecting divine salvation. It is the unparalleled character of God's intervention on man's behalf which assures men that God will not fail to fulfill all his salvation promises, including granting believers a full share in Christ's inheritance (cf. vs. 32c with vs. 17).

A word is required about vs. 34. Although it deals explicitly with Christ, "the one who died, yes rather was raised," his Sonship cannot have been too far removed from Paul's thought given the fact that he had just identified the one who had died as the Son of God. The position of Christ at God's right hand and his intercession on behalf of those for whom he died bespeaks his close relation with the Father, a relation which Paul clearly understood in terms of Christ's divine Sonship. Passages to be examined shortly will confirm ideas we have already encountered in Rom. 1.3-4 and Phil. 2.6-11 that Christ's Sonship relation with God formed a crucial part in the apostle's thought concerning the resurrected Christ. In fact, we may now turn to a text, Col. 1.13-14, which offers a bridge between the thought of the Son of God who died to bring salvation and the Son of God who reigns in heaven with God.

D. "The Son of God's Love": Col. 1.13-20

At first sight it may appear strange to include Col. 1.13-20 among instances of Sonship language which are primarily soteriological or redemptive in orientation since the actual use of the word "Son" comes in a phrase about the kingdom of the Son: "He [God] has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of his love."



Such a reference, in and of itself, rightfully belongs alongside 1 Cor. 15.24-28. This initial impression, however, does not take account of the context, and more importantly it overlooks the dependence of vss. 14-20 on the phrase "Son of his love," for the "Son of his love" is properly the subject of vss. 14-20. If Col. 1 passed from vs. 13 to vs. 15 directly and then reached its climax in vs. 17, the Sonship of Christ would receive a distinctly cosmological flavor. But vss. 14 and 18-20 (as well as 21-22) show that Paul's real concern is with redemption,<sup>1</sup> the divine redemption which has its origin in the Son of God, who died in order to mediate redemption and reconciliation.<sup>2</sup> Even the reference to transference into the kingdom of the beloved Son of God in vs. 13 has an essentially redemptive significance. In light of these contextual considerations it is necessary to discuss Col. 1.13ff. under the rubric "the Son of God and his saving death," J. Blank's "soteriologische Horizont."

Because the material of interest to us occurs within a series of relative clauses commencing with vs. 13, we must briefly examine the context in order to determine the relation of vss. 13-20 with what precedes. After informing the Colossians of the thanks he gives to God because of the reports he has had of them (vss. 3-8), Paul proceeds to tell his readers of the continual prayers which he offers up to God on their behalf (vs. 9). He prays that they may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in wisdom and spiritual understanding so that they may live lives worthy of the Lord, fully seeking to please him (vss. 9-10a). He further desires that they may bear fruit in every good work and increase in the knowledge of God, being greatly strengthened according to the might of the Lord's glory unto all patience and endurance (vss. 10b-11). Finally Paul says in vss. 11 and 12 "μετὰ χαρᾶς (vs. 11) εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ πατρὶ τῷ ἱκανώσαντι ὑμᾶς (ἡμᾶς?) εἰς τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κλήρου τῶν ἁγίων ἐν τῷ φωτί." Although it is possible that the participle εὐχαριστοῦντες may be parallel with the participles προσευχόμενοι and αἰτούμενοι in vs. 9, and therefore refer to an

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. G.B. Caird, Paul's Letters from Prison (1976), p. 175 who notes, "The thought of the passage as a whole begins with redemption and returns to redemption."

<sup>2</sup> Wengst, Christologische Formeln, p. 171 observes: "Der Dank von v 12 betrifft die dort erfolgte Rettung, deren Subjekt zwar Gott ist, aber ihr 'Mittler' ist sein Sohn. Darauf folgt jetzt in vv 15-20 das vorgegebene Lied, dessen Sinn an dieser Stelle für den Verfasser des

action by Paul (and those with him), it is much more probable that εὐχαριστοῦντες should be taken with the four participles of vss. 10-11. Thus it summons Paul's readers to render thanks to the Father who has provided for their salvation blessings by authorizing them to participate in the inheritance of his elect.<sup>1</sup> The whole of vss. 13-20 expand the thought of vs. 12 providing a thorough explication of the basis for giving thanks to the Father. That all or part of vss. 13-20 form a Christian hymn or liturgy is widely held, though of little consequence to the actual exegesis of the passage.<sup>2</sup>

Grammatically the relative clause of vs. 13 further identifies the Father by specifying another aspect of his saving activity towards those who believe. Functionally, however, it presents a further important reason for giving thanks to the Father. The Father has saved his people from the power of darkness and transferred them into the kingdom of his beloved Son (cf. 1 Thess. 5.5).<sup>3</sup>

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Kolossierbriefes der ist, zu zeigen, wieso und wodurch der Sohn 'Mittler' ist . . ."

<sup>1</sup>See E. Lohse, Colossians, p. 34 on the thanksgiving Gattung in Judaism. According to R.P. Martin, Colossians and Philemon (1974), p. 53, the participle εὐχαριστοῦντες has "the force of the imperative mood," but this seems questionable.

<sup>2</sup>Käsemann, "Baptismal Liturgy," pp. 149-163, for example, thinks a "pre-Christian hymn has been transformed by a liturgical redaction into a Christian homology. Cf. Wengst, Christologische Formeln, pp. 170-180; N. Kehl, Der Christushymnus im Kolosserbrief (1967), pp. 28-51; E. Schweizer, Der Brief an die Kolosser (1976), pp. 45ff.; and Lohse, Colossians, pp. 32ff. Lohse maintains that "Vss. 12-14 . . . are placed before the Christ-hymn as a sort of introit which introduces the solemn hymn sung by the community." Perhaps the only recent writer to express strong doubts about an actual hymn in Col. 1.15-20 is G.B. Caird, Paul's Letters, p. 174-175. As he points out, "Even if we were to accept the hymn theory, we should still have to say that the meaning of the passage in Colossians is what the author of the letter (Paul) intended it to mean." He is not quite correct, however, when he goes on to say, "Speculations about the previous function of the hymn may have some interest for the study of Christian origins, but they are totally irrelevant to the exegesis of Colossians." If a pre-Pauline hymn could be arrived at in Col. 1.15-20, then it would help in understanding the origin of Paul's beliefs and perhaps also the way in which he differed from the thought of the original author and why. Unfortunately the numerous attempts to get behind Col. 1.15-20 to a pre-Pauline (or nebenpaulinisch) piece remain hypothetical.

<sup>3</sup>C.F.D. Moule, The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon (1957), p. 56 finds a very striking parallel to Col. 1.12-14 in Acts 26.18 when Paul defines the mission given to him by the risen Lord: to open the eyes of those to whom he is sent,



## 1. Col. 1.13b-14

The mention of God's Son in vs. 13b leads to a change in the line of discussion since vss. 14-20 concern the Son of God. The shift in focus to the Son of God in a series of dependent statements intended to expand upon the idea of giving thanks to the Father is not without significance. For Paul it is virtually impossible to talk about what God has done for the Christian without at the same time talking about his Son who was his agent in both creation and redemption (cf. 1 Cor. 8.6).<sup>1</sup> In keeping with the thought of Phil. 2.11, to acknowledge and praise the Son and his work is tantamount to offering praise and thanksgiving to God his Father.

The expression τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ of vs. 13b represents a unique formulation in the letters of Paul on two counts. In the first place Paul nowhere else employs the combination ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ. Scholars have frequently described these words as a "Semitic" form of expression because they look like very awkward Greek.<sup>2</sup> Hebrew, on the other hand, with its *limited* supply of adjectives, *normally chose* to describe and delimit nouns by adding qualifying nouns in the genitive construct relation. The nature of the construct relation necessitated that any pronoun pertaining to the noun controlling the genitive construct be appended to the genitive construct. Thus ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ appears to be a Greek rendering of  $\text{בְּנֵי אֱהִיָּהוּ} \text{ בְּנֵי}$  and means "his beloved Son,"

that they might turn from darkness into light (σκοτόους εἰς φῶς) and from the power (ἐξουσίας) of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins (ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν) and a share (κλήρον) among the saints (ἡγιασμένοις) by faith in Christ. In Gal. 1.4 Paul ascribes a very similar saving function to Christ, who accomplished his task according to the will of God.

<sup>1</sup>In Col. 1.3 Paul begins the body of his letter by saying, "We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (cf. 2 Cor. 1.4). This seems to presuppose the thought that giving thanks to the Father has its basis in the activity of the Son of God, who is the agent of God.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Moule, Colossians, p. 58; Lohse, Colossians, p. 38, n. 44, and Schweizer, Kolosser, p. 49. For a less probable explanation see M. Dibelius, Die Briefe des Apostels Paulus: Die Neun Kleinen Briefe (1913), p. 69 who sees it as an example of Attic poetic expression. Schweizer, Kolosser, p. 46 thinks the Son formula may have stemmed from the original introductory statement of the hymn in Col. 1.15-20.

which would more naturally be expressed in Greek as ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ ἀγαπητός (cf. Mk. 1.11; 9.7; 12.6). The designation of Christ as God's "beloved Son" has considerable relevance in Colossians because it emphasizes the intimate connection of Christ to God necessary to account for his unique position in the cosmos and in redemption.

The other unusual feature in the formulation "the kingdom of his beloved Son" is the expression "kingdom of the Son." References to the kingdom of God abound sufficiently to demonstrate that Paul knew the concept and was capable of employing it in both present and future senses (cf. Rom. 14.27; 1 Cor. 4.20; 6.9, 10; 15.50; Gal. 5.21; Col. 4.11; 1 Thess. 2.12; 2 Thess. 1.5). But he never mentions the kingdom of Christ, unless Eph. 5.5 is from his hand. Nevertheless, the idea of a kingdom belonging to Christ represents an authentic piece of Pauline theology. According to 1 Cor. 15.24, when the end comes, Christ will restore the kingdom to his God and Father. That Phil. 2.9-11 probably has the same conceptual background as 1 Cor. 15.24-28 has already been seen. Rom. 1.3-4 also has affinities with the concept of Christ's kingly rule. In both 1 Cor. 15.24-28 and Col. 1.13 the Father-Son relation between God and Christ occupies the foreground.<sup>1</sup> This seems to indicate that Christ's Sonship is a crucial if not necessary assumption for maintaining his kingly rule in the place of God.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This is also true in the case of Rom. 1.3-4 and Phil. 2.9-11, as has been shown.

<sup>2</sup>Schweizer, Kolosser, p. 48 maintains regarding Col. 1.13: "Dahinter steht die davidische Verheissung des kommenden Reiches des Sohnes Gottes (2 Sam 7, 16; Ps 2, 7; 4 Q flor 1, 11; 4 Q patr 4; Lk 1, 33), bei der freilich der verheissene 'Sohn' immer mehr mit Israel (statt dem Messias) identifiziert wurde (Ps. Sol. 17f; Jub 1.24f; 4 Q flor 1, 7f . . .)" This assertion has doubtful value because Paul shows no traces of Messianic Sonship with the exception of Rom. 1.3-4 where he probably corrects an earlier Messianic Sonship formulation to conform with his own wider Sonship conception. The scope of Christ's kingly rule comes closer to that of the Son of Man in Dan. 7.13-14 (and in the Gospel traditions) than to that of the Davidic kingship. The application of a line from Ps. 8 to the Son of God in 1 Cor. 15.27 supports this view. Ps. 8, as is well-known makes reference to the Son of Man. Hebr. 2.5-9 in all probability understands Ps. 8 to be talking about Christ as the Danielic Son of Man, and therefore Paul's reference in 1 Cor. 15.27 may come out of the same background. See Loader, "Apocalyptic Sonship," pp. 526ff. and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, p. 338 who claims, "Paul's designation of Christ as the Son of God . . . exactly corresponds to Jesus' intention in his self-designation as the Son of Man."



The main thrust of what Paul has to say about the Son of God does not concern his kingdom but who the Son is and more importantly the nature of his work in creation and redemption. The  $\epsilon\upsilon\ \tilde{\omega}$  of vs. 14 relates the assertion regarding redemption to the beloved Son of God. It is in him that Christians experience redemption, conceived in vs. 14 as forgiveness of sins (cf. Col. 2.13; Eph. 1.7). Although Paul seldom mentions either the idea of redemption or that of the forgiveness of sins, several passages demonstrate his familiarity with these two concepts. Perhaps, before all others, the juxtaposing of Rom. 3.24 with 3.23 and the citation of Ps. 32.1-2 in the context of Paul's discussion of justification in Rom. 4 (vss. 7-8) indicate that redemption in Christ Jesus included justification and that Paul understood justification to entail forgiveness of sins.<sup>1</sup> In light of the Sonship passages already examined, the connection between Christ's Sonship and his soteriological function can come as no surprise. Sonship provides the necessary presupposition for explaining why Christ's redemptive death (cf. Col. 1.20) can lead to God saving believers from the power of darkness and transferring them into the kingdom of his Son (vs. 13). As Son of God, Christ represents God in effecting salvation. C.F.D. Moule sees this point clearly when he reflects, redemption "cannot be accounted for in terms of a Redeemer who is included among created things: it demands the postulate of divine action."<sup>2</sup> For Paul, Christ's divine Sonship allows for the postulation that his death constituted a decisive act of God.

## 2. Col. 1.15-20

The Sonship theme carries on into the so-called Christ hymn of vss. 15-20 since the relative pronouns ( $\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$ ) of vss. 15 and 18 and the numerous instances of the pronoun  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  in vss. 15-20 (with one exception) have their antecedent in the words "his beloved Son" of vs. 13.<sup>3</sup> As J.G. Gibbs notes:

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Cerfaux, Christian in Paul, p. 422 who observes, "Justification (indicated by the verb  $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\omicron$ ) seems primarily to concern the forgiveness of sins in a passage such as Rom. 3.23-24."

<sup>2</sup>Moule, Colossians, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup>The examination of Col. 1.15-20 which follows makes no attempt to treat the numerous exegetical questions raised by the

The  $\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  and  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  clause in 1:15-20 identify further "the Son of his love" in 1.13, and the smoothness of the transition indicates that for the author of the letter there is no dichotomy between the description in the hymn and the Christology just referred to in the prayer . . .<sup>1</sup>

It is possible to go even further than this, however. The connection of the content of vss. 15-20 to Christ's divine Sonship appears to be intentional. The things articulated in vss. 15-20 could only be said of one who stands in the closest possible relation with God sharing in the divine activity and even the divine nature (cf. Col. 2.9). Christ's divine Sonship was the natural category to apply at this point because it preserves and affirms the unity between God and his agent in creation and redemption.

Not only does the  $\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  of vs. 15 refer to "his beloved Son" in vs. 13, but the words  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\omicron\acute{\alpha}\tau\omicron\upsilon$  have a meaning parallel to the Sonship conception. In our discussion of Gal. 1.16 we had cause to examine 2 Cor. 4.4-6 where Paul calls Christ the  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ . We arrived at the conclusion there that in both 2 Cor. 4.4 and Col. 1.15 the  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\upsilon$  designation identifies Christ as the one who reveals the inner essence of God visibly.<sup>2</sup> Thus to say that Christ is the image of God is virtually synonymous with describing him as the unique Son of God, and in fact Col. 1.15 makes this correspondence since the  $\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  has its antecedent in "his beloved Son," and the copulative  $\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\nu$  connects the  $\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  with the designation  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ . The description of Christ's position with respect to creation and his role in creation as detailed in vss. 15b-17 assume his Sonship. Christ's status of  $\pi\rho\omega\tau\acute{o}\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron\varsigma\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\eta\varsigma\ \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma$

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passage; rather our efforts must be directed towards elucidating the text from the perspective of the theme of Sonship.

<sup>1</sup>J.G. Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, pp. 100-101.

<sup>2</sup>See supra, pp. 84-86. The attempt of Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 70ff. and 78ff. to limit the  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\upsilon$  language to a quite specific origin in Gen. 1.26-27 is not convincing. His explanation that "Paul applies the same 'Adamitic' categories (Image, Firstborn) with which he describes Christ's significance in 'eschatology' to his place in 'protology' as well" (p. 82) poses more questions than it solves. If Christ is a 'protological' Adam then what is his relation to the Adam of Genesis 1 and 2? Ridderbos certainly rejects seeing it in terms of Philonic Logos speculation (or Jewish Wisdom thought), but in the process he leaves little alternative except to believe that Paul independently came to a similar conclusion as Philo by reasoning from "eschatology" to "protology." Paul's cosmological reflection in Col. 1.15-17 does not derive from his understanding of Christ's role in



attributes to him priority and superiority over the created order. It does not imply that he was the first thing created, because vs. 16 asserts that "all things" were created through him.<sup>1</sup> As Lohse remarks, "It refers instead to his uniqueness, by which he is distinguished from all creation."<sup>2</sup> The creation by God of all things "in him," "through him" and "for him" and the fact that he is before all things and all things hold together in him, confirms that he stands on God's side vis-à-vis creation. Naturally enough Paul understands this in terms of Christ's Sonship, an observation supported not only by the dependence of vss. 15-17 on the Sonship appellation in vs. 13 but also by 1 Cor. 8.6. In 1 Cor. 8.6, another text relating cosmological and redemptive significance to Christ, Paul juxtaposes the expression εἰς θεὸς ὁ πατήρ with εἰς κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός. He thereby implies the Sonship of Christ,<sup>3</sup> "δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα." This latter phrase apparently refers to his role as agent

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the new creation as Ridderbos asserts but from the transference of Wisdom and Logos speculation to the Son of God who became man. Cf. Caird, Paul's Letters, pp. 174ff. who adopts a line somewhat similar to Ridderbos' in order to exclude the category of pre-existence from Col. 1.15-17. Strangely enough, he maintains in his exegesis of Phil. 2.6-11 that Paul believed in Christ's personal pre-existence and may have been the source of this concept in the early church (p. 119). Why he then excludes it from his discussion of Col. 1.15-17 is somewhat mystifying.

<sup>1</sup>Moule, Colossians, pp. 63-64 argues that to interpret πρωτότοκος in the sense of Christ's inclusion with other created things "would simply be inconsistent—not only with the immediately following words about Christ's agency in creation (implying his priority to it) and with similar references elsewhere . . . , but also with the conception of Christ as the divine and pre-existent Wisdom, and with the Christian experience of redemption, which cannot be accounted for in terms of a Redeemer who is included among created things: it demands the postulate of a divine action." He then goes on to say that πρωτότοκος should be interpreted as "'prior to and supreme over'" in Col. 1.15 (p. 65). It is interesting that Moule notes the theological point which we have consistently argued, with regard to Sonship, that Christ must stand on God's side if redemption is to exist in him. See W. Michaelis, "πρωτότοκος," TDNT 6, pp. 878-879 for further evidence against rendering first-born of creation as referring to Christ as the first thing created.

<sup>2</sup>Lohse, Colossians, pp. 48-49.

<sup>3</sup>See Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, pp. 192-194 and Robertson and Plummer, 1 Corinthians, pp. 167-168 for this interpretation of 1 Cor. 8.6. Cf. H. Langkammer, "Litarische und theologische Einzelstücke in 1 Kor. VIII.6," NTS 17 (1970-71), p. 194.

in creation, just as ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ refers to his role in redemption.<sup>1</sup>

The statement in vss. 18-20 completes the explication concerning God's beloved Son. According to vs. 18 the Son occupies the position of preeminence in both the Church and the new creation introduced by the resurrection. The ἵνα clause in vs. 18c, "that he might be first in all things," refers to Christ's position both in creation and in the new creation. Since he already possessed preeminence in creation, his resurrection as firstborn from the dead was necessary to insure his continued place of priority with respect to all the works of God. This means that the ὅτι clause of vs. 19 cannot be limited to the exaltation of Christ,<sup>2</sup> nor to the human existence of Christ.<sup>3</sup> The one who was Son of God from before creation must have possessed the divine fullness at all times, at least as far as Paul was concerned. Vss. 15-17 allow for no other conclusion. Thus the ὅτι clause of vs. 19 indicates the primary reason for Christ's preeminence in creation, as well as in the new creation.<sup>4</sup> The πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα is the subject of the verb in vs. 19, and on the basis of Col. 2.9 it signifies "all the fullness of deity" or "all the fullness of God," though it may be a periphrasis for "God in all his fullness."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, p 61.

<sup>2</sup>Schweizer, Kolosser, p. 67 maintains, "Wenn man überhaupt so präzisieren darf, ist wohl an die Erhöhung als das Ereignis zu denken, in dem diese Fülle der totenerweckenden Kräfte Gottes in ihm Wohnung nahm."

<sup>3</sup>Lohse, Colossians, p. 58 believes, "No reference is contained in this statement to any particular event, e.g., the incarnation, the baptism or the transfiguration of Jesus, rather, it relates to the Christ-event as a whole."

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 156.

<sup>5</sup>Moule, Colossians, pp. 70-71 (see also pp. 164-169). Cf. Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 157; Lohse, Colossians, pp. 56-58; and Caird, Paul's Letters, pp. 180-181. Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 221ff., Käsemann, "Baptismal Liturgy," pp. 158-159, Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 157 and Lohse, Colossians, pp. 57-58 find the background of πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα in Gnosticism and/or Hellenistic syncretism. However, Schweizer, Kolosser, pp. 66-67 is correct in rejecting the relevance of this connection. With Moule, Colossians, p. 166 (cf. also Hegermann, Schöpfungsmittler, p. 105) we do not believe that πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα constitutes a technical religious expression for Paul.



This can only mean that all the attributes of God such as his wisdom, power, and love dwell in his Son. This conception, in a sense, constitutes the ultimate expression of Paul's belief in Christ's divine Sonship, for with it he identifies Christ with God in terms of his sharing in what makes God to be God, an idea presupposed in Phil. 2.6-11.

The hymnic piece in vss. 15-20 ends with a pronouncement concerning the reconciliation of all things to God through his Son. εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεός must be understood in vs. 20,<sup>1</sup> so that vs. 20 provides a second reason for the priority of the Son in vs. 18c. The εἰς αὐτόν and the masculine participle εἰρηνοποιήσας of vs. 20 refer to God.<sup>2</sup> The nature of the reconciliation in Col. 1.20 transcends what Paul states concerning personal reconciliation between God and man in Rom. 5.1-11 and 2 Cor. 5.18-21 because here "all things" are said to be reconciled, whether things on earth or in heaven. Paul employs the aorist ἀποκαταλλάξαι, because the essential act of reconciliation was completed and because he believed with complete confidence that God's efforts at reconciliation and peacemaking through the blood of his Son's cross could not be thwarted in the end.

The fact that Col. 1.13-20 connects reconciliation and peacemaking with God's Son confirms what we have claimed previously. At the heart of Paul's faith in the saving significance of Christ's death lies his belief that he who suffered and died stood in the closest possible relation with God as God's representative in instituting salvation. On any other terms, the salvation procured by Christ would not have originated in God but in man. Thus Christ's Sonship constitutes a necessary presupposition for the whole of Paul's soteriological thought. But Col. 1.15-17 also implies that Christ's Sonship is a necessary presupposition for his role as God's agent in creation, for he stands with God over against creation.

In this chapter we have seen the close connection between Christ's Sonship and his saving death. This connection was necessary

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<sup>1</sup>See Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. ibid., p. 158 and Moule, Colossians, p. 70.

for Paul in order to explain why Christ's death had universal saving significance. It was not merely a man who died on the Roman cross, but the unique Son of God. In a very real sense he gave himself on each man's behalf as an act of love (Gal. 2.20), but this only had saving significance because he was the Son of God and therefore did not himself require redemption, justification, or reconciliation with God. His death was a manifestation not only of his own love but also of God's love. In saving men from the power of sin and death God could do nothing any more drastic than what he did in giving up his own beloved Son on man's behalf (Rom. 5.8-10; 8.32; Col. 1.13-14). The texts examined in this chapter thus go hand-in-hand with the sending texts examined in the previous chapter because both understand the saving significance of Christ in connection with his unique Sonship relationship with God.

In Col. 1.13-20 Paul takes us much further, for not only does he portray the Son of God as God's agent in redemption and the salvation of men, but he also claims that the Son was God's agent in creation and in the reconciliation of the entire universe to God, its creator. Clearly for Paul Sonship cannot merely be related to the Gospel and to the saving death of Christ; it also accounts for his position in creation: the eikon of the invisible God, in whom all things were created, is the Son of God, in whom all the fullness of deity dwells (cf. Col. 1.19 and 2.9). Thus Christ's relationship to God, conceived as Sonship (which embraces the eikon idea), enables Paul to ascribe to Christ a position of preëminence in the principal divine acts of creation and redemption.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE SON OF GOD IN THE PRESENT

#### AND IN THE FUTURE

Paul did not limit his understanding of Christ as the Son of God to any particular segment of Christ's existence nor did he associate it in an exclusive way with only one or two aspects of his Christology. This is so because for Paul the Son of God terminology was not primarily honorific and titular in nature, rather it was, in the first instance, relational in orientation.<sup>1</sup> For this reason Paul employs the Son of God terminology in passages referring to the Son's pre-human existence, his coming into human existence, his saving death, his relation with his people in the present, his worship as Lord, his future return for his people, his kingly sovereignty, and his final subordination to his Father. Some of the passages already examined impinge upon several of these themes. This is particularly true of Rom. 1.4; Gal. 1.16; Phil. 2.6-11; and Col. 1.13-20, all of which have importance for the current topic of discussion, though they have been dealt with under other rubrics. Rom. 1.4 speaks of the "Son of God with power since the resurrection," an obvious allusion to the current Lordship of Christ. Gal. 1.16 concerns the revelation of the exalted Son of God to the apostle Paul, while Phil. 2.9-11 treats the sovereign rule of the Son of God and the universal homage which he will receive. Col. 1.13-20 refers to the kingdom of the Son of God in which his preëminence is established by his status as first-born from the dead. Whereas the four passages just mentioned deal with the theme of Christ's Sonship in both past and present or

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<sup>1</sup>This is the reason why it is necessary to bring a variety of passages into the discussion of Christological Sonship in Paul where the term Son does not occur. Passages may imply or presuppose the Father-Son relation of God and Christ without utilizing the terminology.

future terms, the five remaining Sonship texts (1 Cor. 1.9; Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.29-30; 1 Thess. 1.9-10; and 1 Cor. 15.23-28) focus either on present or future aspects of Christology in connection with the Sonship designation.

A. "Called to Fellowship with  
God's Son": 1 Cor. 1.9

On the surface, 1 Cor. 1.9 appears to be a rather ordinary statement without any special importance, coming as it does at the end of one of Paul's typical introductory thanksgivings (cf. 2 Cor. 1.3-11; Phil. 1.3-11; Col. 1.3-8; 1 Thess. 1.2-10; 2 Thess. 1.3-12; and Philemon 4-7). Such a view, however, overlooks the fact that the content of Paul's prescripts and introductory formulations originate in his profound experience and theological reflection.<sup>1</sup> In its context 1 Cor. 1.9 is intended to assure the Corinthians of their salvation based on the unwavering faithfulness of God. The idea of particular interest for us in vs. 9 concerns being called by God "εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν." This formulation, attached as it is to the verb ἐκλήθητε, suggests that the original call of the Gospel for the Corinthians constituted a summons to fellowship with the Son of God.<sup>2</sup> This conforms to what was said earlier: Paul preached a Gospel which had as its content the Son of God. Apparently, however, Paul did not restrict the message of the Gospel of God's Son to the sending of the Son and his saving death. He also invited those who would believe to enter into a living relation with the Son of God. Paul does not elaborate on the nature of "fellowship with the Son of God" in 1 Cor. 1.9 because he is able to assume that his readers know what he means.

In a very real sense, for Paul, the whole of a Christian's existence, lived in faith and obedience, represents an ongoing fellowship with the Son of God. The Christian knows himself to be "in Christ," that is in a living relationship with Christ in

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<sup>1</sup>See E. Lohmeyer, "Probleme paulinischer Theologie," ZNW 26 (1927), pp. 158-173 who discusses the theological significance of the prescripts of Paul's letters.

<sup>2</sup>On the connection between the call of God and the preaching of the Gospel see 2 Thess. 2.13-14.



which he is united with Christ (cf. Gal. 3.26-28; 1 Cor. 6.15-17; Col. 2.6-7), and he experiences the presence of the resurrected Christ in his own life (cf. Rom. 8.10; Gal. 2.20; Col. 1.27) even to sharing in Christ's own Sonship relationship with God (cf. Rom. 8.15-17; Gal. 4.6).<sup>1</sup> κοινωνία with the Son of God means that the Christian not only has a personal relationship with Christ, but he also shares in all the salvation benefits arising from Christ's death. This he does through sharing in Christ's death (cf. Rom. 6.3-11; 2 Cor. 5.14-15; Gal. 2.19-20; Col. 3.3) in order that he may share in Christ's resurrection life and glory (cf. Rom. 6.5, 8; 8.17ff., 29-30;<sup>2</sup> Phil. 3.21; Col. 1.27).<sup>3</sup> Although Paul conceives of participation in Christ's resurrection life and glory as primarily future, he hints at the fact that the Christian already experiences this future life and glory (cf. Rom. 6.4; 2 Cor. 3.18; 4.10ff., 13.4; Col. 3.1). Nevertheless, the present existence of the Christian is mainly characterized by suffering with Christ (συνπάσχειν) (cf. Rom. 8.17, 18; Col. 1.24; Phil. 1.29; 3.10-11; 2 Cor. 4.10ff.).

Fellowship with the Son of God does not consist in mere intellectual abstractions for Paul but rests on the experience of the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8.9) or the Spirit of God's Son (Gal. 4.6). For this reason we may examine Gal. 4.6 as a sort of corollary to the statement of 1 Cor. 1.9: "You were called into fellowship with God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

#### B. "The Spirit of God's Son": Gal. 4.6

Previously Gal. 4.4-5 was studied in conjunction with the

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<sup>1</sup>Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 40 notes with regard to 1 Cor. 1.9 "that the Christians in fellowship with Christ share, not in his being . . . , but in his relation with the Father."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 144 who comments concerning 1 Cor. 1.9: "Da ohne Zweifel die eschatologisch-vollendete Gemeinschaft mit Christus gemeint ist, wie der Kontext V. 7f zeigt, ist die Aussage sachlich identisch mit unserer Vorherbestimmung (und Berufung) zur 'Mitgestaltung mit der Eikon des Sohnes Gottes' von Röm 8.29."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Sanders Paul, p. 447, who maintains, "the main theme of Paul's gospel was the saving action of God in Jesus Christ and how his hearers could participate in that action." Sanders devotes the following twenty-seven pages to explicating this thesis. Also cf. Manson, On Paul, pp. 72ff. and W. Grundmann, "σύν-μετά κτλ.," TDNT 7, pp. 781-793.

theme of the sending of God's Son into the world to bring salvation through his death. Gal. 4.6 speaks of a "sending" having a completely different character than the sending discussed in vss. 4-5 (and Rom. 8.3-4 as well). According to Gal. 4.6 God has sent the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of believers, crying "Abba, Father." The principal concern of vs. 6, however, is not the Sonship of Christ, but the sonship of Christians which depends upon Christ's Sonship for its own reality. On account of this, vs. 6 will be subject to a more detailed analysis in the second part of the thesis. Nevertheless, we may presuppose the results of that discussion by noting the intention of vs. 6: in Gal. 3.26-4.7 Paul seeks to demonstrate the existence of a sonship relation between the Galatians and God; to this end he finds incontrovertible evidence for its existence in their reception of the Spirit of God's Son who cries "Abba, Father," in their hearts.

If it may be granted that the Spirit of God's Son assures the believer that he is an adopted son of God (Gal. 4.5), then for the present, attention may be focused on the significance of the phrase "the Spirit of his (God's) Son" in connection with Paul's Christological and pneumatological thought. A comprehensive investigation into Paul's understanding of the Spirit is impossible here.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary, however, to grasp the relation between Christ and the Spirit in Paul's thought if the significance of the expression "the Spirit of God's Son" is to be appreciated.

# 1. The Relationship of Christ and the Spirit

I. Hermann has described 2 Cor. 3.17a as "der locus classicus, der das Verhältnis von Kyrios und Pneuma beleuchtet."<sup>2</sup> He finds in the passage a complete identification of the Spirit with the risen Lord in an experiential sense: "Dieses Pneuma ist der Kyrios Christus selbst insofern er—in dieser Weise seit der Erhöhung—sich

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<sup>1</sup>For more extensive treatments of this theme see K. Stalder, Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus (1962); I. Hermann, Kyrios und Pneuma: Studien zur Christologie des paulinischen Hauptbriefe (1961); N.Q. Hamilton, The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul (1957), esp. pp. 3-40; Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 199-342; and E. Schweizer, "πνεῦμα κτλ.," TDNT, 6, pp. 415-437.

<sup>2</sup>Hermann, Kyrios, p. 50.



dem Menschen gewährt und von ihm erfahren werden kann."<sup>1</sup> The legitimacy of this interpretation of 2 Cor. 3.17a has long been questioned. Recently J.D.G. Dunn has articulated the challenge to the view of Hermann, and those taking a similar view of 2 Cor. 3.17, in a very forceful way.<sup>2</sup> As Dunn and others have claimed,<sup>3</sup> the κύριος of vs. 17 with the anaphoric article, does not refer specifically to the Lord Jesus Christ but to the word "Lord" in vs. 16 which is taken from Ex. 34.34. Since 2 Cor. 3.7-18 forms a "Christian midrash" on Exodus 34, Paul means in vs. 17a that the "Lord" of Ex. 34.34 is, in the Christian interpretation, the Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

In a later essay Dunn himself maintains that 1 Cor. 15.45 makes the same identification between the resurrected Christ and the Spirit that Hermann claims for 2 Cor. 3.17a.<sup>5</sup> For Dunn, 1 Cor.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 57. With respect to Hermann's view on the identification of Lord and Spirit in 2 Cor. 3.17 see the extensive list of those holding similar views in J.D.G. Dunn, "2 Corinthians iii.17—'The Lord is the Spirit,'" JTS 21 (1970), pp. 309, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Dunn, "2 Corinthians iii.17," pp. 309-320. W.G. Kümmel in Lietzmann, Korinther, p. 200 adumbrates the position of Dunn for vs. 17a, but Dunn has worked it out in greater detail and also extends his thesis to cover vss. 17b-18 which Kümmel did not do. See also W.C. van Unnik, "'With Unveiled Faces,' An Exegesis of 2 Corinthians iii.12-18," NT 6 (1963), pp. 153-169.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. C.F.D. Moule, "2 Cor 3:18b, καθάπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος." Neues Testament und Geschichte: Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament (1972), pp. 232-237; Bruce, Paul, p. 121; Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, pp. 122-123, and Kümmel, Theology, p. 168.

<sup>4</sup>Among those rejecting an identification between Christ and the Spirit in 2 Cor. 3.17a, appraisals of the significance of vss. 17b-18 for the general problem of the relation of Christ and the Spirit vary. Cf. Dunn, "2 Corinthians iii.17," pp. 317-318 and Moule, "2 Cor 3:18b," pp. 232-237 with Kümmel, Theology, p. 168 and Bruce, Paul, p. 121. Professor Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans 2 (1979), p. 856 interprets the Lord of vs. 17a to be the resurrected and exalted Christ but then maintains: "The fact that the Lord and the Spirit, while they are identified in the first half of the verse, are distinguished in the second half, is an indication that we should not take 'the Lord is the Spirit' to imply that, for Paul, the exalted Christ and the Holy Spirit are identical, but rather that to turn to Christ is to be introduced into the realm of the Spirit."

<sup>5</sup>J.D.G. Dunn, "1 Corinthians 15:45—Last Adam, Life-giving Spirit," Christ and Spirit in the New Testament (1973), pp. 127-141. Also see his Jesus and Spirit, pp. 322-323. Others besides Dunn approach this passage from the same perspective, but he has argued the point with greater rigor. Cf. Hermann, Kyrios, pp. 61ff., Bruce, Paul, p. 122; and Hamilton, Holy Spirit, pp. 14-15.

15.45 serves as the "locus classicus" for the relation of Christ and Spirit. In 1 Cor. 15.45 Paul contrasts the first man, Adam, who became a  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta\nu\ \zeta\omega\sigma\alpha\nu$  with the Last Adam who became a  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \zeta\omega\pi\omicron\tau\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon$  by the resurrection. Dunn finds on the basis of this passage:

Paul identifies the exalted Jesus with the Spirit--not with a spiritual being ( $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \zeta\omega\nu$ ) or a spiritual dimension or sphere ( $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ ), but with the Spirit, the Holy Spirit ( $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \zeta\omega\pi\omicron\tau\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon$ ). Immanent christology is for Paul pneumatology; in the believer's experience there is no distinction between Christ and Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Dunn qualifies this, however, by hastily adding, "This does not mean of course that Paul makes no distinction between Christ and the Spirit."<sup>2</sup> As we shall see Dunn, along with Hermann and others, is correct in claiming that the exalted Christ can only be experienced through the Spirit. But Paul does not fully identify the Spirit with the risen Christ even in a dynamic and experiential way because he knows the Spirit functions as the agent of God as well as of Christ in the experience of the Christian.<sup>3</sup> In fact the trinitarian schemata of 1 Cor. 12.4-6 and 2 Cor. 13.13 imply the "autonomous" identity of the Spirit in Paul.<sup>4</sup> With regard to Dunn's assertion that 1 Cor. 15.45 formally identifies Christ and the Spirit, careful exegesis of the passage casts considerable doubt on this claim. When 1 Cor. 15.45 is read in association with vss. 44 and 46 a very specific reason emerges why Paul should call the risen Christ "Spirit." In vs. 44 Paul contrasts being sown a  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha\ \psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$  with being raised a  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha\ \pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$  and argues that if there is a  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha\ \psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ , there is also a  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$  body. In vs. 46 he

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, "1 Corinthians 15:45," p. 139.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 139. Cf. E.E. Ellis, "Christ and Spirit in 1 Corinthians," Christ and Spirit in the New Testament (1973), pp. 273-274.

<sup>3</sup>Ellis, "Christ and Spirit," p. 269 rightly maintains that "in Paul's usage, no discernible difference appears between the (divine) Spirit, Spirit of God = Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8.9), Spirit of the Lord and the holy Spirit."

<sup>4</sup>It seems best to us to take the genitive  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$  in 2 Cor. 13.13 as subjective just as  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon\ \text{Ἰησοῦ}\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$  and  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  are subjective genitives with their respective governing nouns. The Spirit "produces" fellowship between God and Christ on the one hand and Christians on the other.



maintains that the order of existence is ψυχικόν then πνευματικόν, a point demonstrated by Christ's own death and resurrection. Thus when he designates the first man as a ψυχὴν ζῶσαν and the Last Adam as a πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν, he refers to the two types of existence ψυχικόν and πνευματικόν, which these figures characterize. Dunn is forced to admit this since otherwise vs. 45 would have no relevance to Paul's argument.<sup>1</sup> Dunn, however, goes on to insist that Paul selected the words "life--giving Spirit" to describe the Last Adam in an attempt "to ground his assertion about the spiritual embodiment of the risen Christ in the experience of the believing community." Dunn means by this: "the believer's experience of the life-giving Spirit is for Paul proof that the risen Jesus is σῶμα πνευματικόν."<sup>2</sup> Whether the Corinthians would have recognized the designation "πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν" in vs. 45 in this light is questionable. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned in the context nor is the article used with the noun πνεῦμα to identify it with the Holy Spirit. The absence of the article indicates that Paul wants to stress the "spirit" quality of the Last Adam's existence not his identity as the Holy Spirit. Although Paul connects the giving of life with the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8.2 and 2 Cor. 3.6), in the sequence of thought in 1 Cor. 15 another reason suggests itself for Paul's choice of ζωοποιοῦν to describe the risen Christ. According to vss. 21-22, since death came by a man, the resurrection also came by a man; as in Adam all men died so in Christ shall all be made alive (ζωοποιηθήσονται). Hence when Paul designates the risen Christ as a "life-giving Spirit," he is not identifying him with the Holy Spirit, but with the πνευματικόν order of existence which he has ushered in, thereby becoming the source of all resurrection life (cf. Rom. 5.21; Gal. 2.19-20; Phil. 3.10-11, 20-21; Col. 3.4).

If neither 2 Cor. 3.17 nor 1 Cor. 15.45 offers a sound starting point for determining Paul's conception of the relation between the Spirit and Christ, Rom. 8.9-11 does, and it has the added advantage of relating the theme of Christ and Spirit to that of God and Spirit. Rom. 8.9-11 is located in an extensive discussion

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, "1 Corinthians 15:45," p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

focusing on the work of the Spirit in salvation. Beginning in vs. 9 Paul applies the principal conception of vss. 4-8 to his readers as the introduction of the second person subject of vs. 9 with the continuation of the contrast between ἐν σαρκί and ἐν πνεύματι indicates. The first part of vs. 9 stresses that the Roman Christians, like all Christians, are not in the sphere of the flesh (ἐν σαρκί) dominated by its influences and strivings, but in the Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι) since (εἵπερ) the Spirit of God (πνεῦμα θεοῦ) dwells in them. This has a negative corollary: if anyone lacks the Spirit, which Paul designates πνεῦμα χριστοῦ in 9b, he does not belong to Christ. The change from πνεῦμα θεοῦ in vs. 9a to πνεῦμα χριστοῦ in 9b is indicative of the synonymity of these two ideas for Paul. The choice of πνεῦμα χριστοῦ in 9b serves to emphasize that the Spirit, because it is the Spirit of Christ, relates a person to Christ. To use a common Pauline expression, it is the basis of a person being "ἐν χριστῷ" (cf. Rom. 8.2). Vs. 10 moves the thought a step further: if Christ is in a man, even though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life-giving on account of the believer's justification. The "χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν" of vs. 10 corresponds to the statement in vs. 9 "πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν" while also presenting a contrasting positive affirmation to the negative statement of vs. 9b. In effect Paul equates "Christ is in you" with the "Spirit of God dwells in you" and the possession of the Spirit of Christ. This indicates that the believer experiences the risen Christ in his life through the presence of the Spirit. The Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, represents and mediates Christ to the believer since the risen Christ no longer encounters men directly (cf. 1 Cor. 15.8).<sup>1</sup> This perhaps explains why Paul attributes similar functions to both Christ and the Spirit in the believer's life.<sup>2</sup> That vs. 11 depicts the Spirit as "the Spirit of the one raising Jesus from the dead," clearly reveals that the Spirit, even though Paul calls him the Spirit of Christ in vs. 9b and knows him to be the source of Christ

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<sup>1</sup>Hermann, Kyrios, p. 50 is thus correct when he asseverates: "Das Wirken des Erhöhten ist nur zu verstehen als ein Wirken mittels des Pneuma. Wo der Geist erfahren wird da wirkt Christus selbst durch sein Pneuma im Innern des Menschen." Cf. Hamilton, Holy Spirit, pp. 15-16; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 389; and Schweizer, "πνεῦμα," p. 419.

<sup>2</sup>For a list of these similar activities see C.F.D. Moule, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," The Church Quarterly 3 (1970), p 287, n. 23.



living in the believer according to vs. 10a, nevertheless has an identity independent of the risen Christ. The Spirit represents both Christ (cf. Rom. 15.18-19; Phil. 1.19) and God (cf. 1 Cor. 2.4-5; 10-12; 3.16; 1 Thess. 4.8) to the believer.

## 2. The Spirit and the Son in Gal. 4.6

Returning to Gal. 4.6, we may now spell out the significance of the expression "the Spirit of God's Son." In light of what has been said, Paul could have substituted the "Spirit of God" for the "Spirit of God's Son" and in fact he does so in Rom. 8.14-17, a passage parallel in thought to Gal. 4.5-7. He chose the expression "the Spirit of God's Son" in Gal. 4.6 because he wished to emphasize that the Spirit, as the representative of the risen Christ, re-duplicates in the Christian, Christ's Sonship relation with God.<sup>1</sup> The importance of this idea for the argument of Galatians will become clear in the second part of the thesis. The connection of the Spirit with the designation of Christ as Son in Gal. 4.6 may also suggest that Christ's Sonship was a decisive factor in Paul's mind for associating the Spirit of God with Christ in the first place.<sup>2</sup>

### C. "Conformity to the Image of God's Son": Rom. 8.29-30

Like Gal. 4.6, Rom. 8.29bc relates to both the Sonship of Christ and the sonship of Christian believers since the elect of God are predestined to share the same form as the image of God's Son so that Christ may be the firstborn among many brothers. In effect, Rom. 8.29bc serves as a conclusion to the believer sonship

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Blank, Paulus, pp. 277-278; Moule, "Holy Spirit," p. 285; and Hermann, Kyrios, p. 97 who concludes regarding Gal. 4.6, "Mit Pneuma umschreibt Paulus die Potenz des Erhöhten, mittels derer er auf den Menschen hin und im Innern des Menschen wirksam ist. Das Wirken des Pneuma ist nicht verschieden von dem des Kyrios, sondern dessen Wirksamkeit unter einem bestimmten Gesichtspunkt. Der durch das Heilswerk Christi objektiv begründete Sohnesstand vor Gott gewinnt für die Einzelexistenz erst vermöge des Pneuma die Erfahrbarkeit und damit die Möglichkeit existentieller Realisation."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 388.

idea first introduced in vs. 14 and recurring throughout the discussion in vss. 15-23 and dominating the thought of the whole of 8.12-30. The believer sonship theme is so closely related to the Sonship of Christ in vs. 29 that it is impossible to explain the Christological Sonship side of the verse without discussing the believer sonship theme of vs. 29 in detail. From the perspective of the two sides of our interest in the one theme of Sonship in Paul, Rom. 8.29bc holds a special place precisely because it links the sonship of believers with the Sonship of Christ.

The ὅτι of vs. 29 indicates that vss. 29-30 offer support for Paul's contention in vs. 28 that "all things cooperate for good to those who love God and who are called according to his purpose."<sup>1</sup> Vss. 29-30 consist of an interlocking series of statements connected by the chain linking of five verbs detailing God's saving acts towards those who love him and are called in accordance with his purpose: "those whom God foreknew (προέγνω) he predestined (προώρισεν); and those whom he predestined, these he also called (ἐκάλεσεν); and those whom he called, these he also justified (ἐδικαίωσεν); and those whom he justified, these he also glorified (ἐδόξασεν)." Into this concatenation Paul interjects, after the first occurrence of the verb προορίζειν, the words "συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς." Because these words interrupt the flow of the concatenation, they may not have belonged to it originally.<sup>2</sup> The actual provenance of the chain of verbs cannot be determined with any certainty, though a baptismal context is frequently suggested.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 217 and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 431. The πάντα συνεργεῖ of vs. 28 (the more probable reading) has been explained in several different ways including taking the "Spirit" from vs. 27 to be the subject of the verb. Professor Cranfield, "Romans 8.28," SJT 19 (1966), pp. 206ff. presents the various possibilities and provides a sound argument for accepting that πάντα is the subject of the verb.

<sup>2</sup>This assumes that the concatenation existed prior to its use here. Cf. K. Grayston, "The Doctrine of Election in Romans 8.28-30," Studia Evangelica II (1964), p. 578, Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 67; and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 199-200.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 271-276; Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 67-68; and Käsemann, Römer, p. 233. The frequency with which baptism is appealed to as the setting of supposed traditional pieces in Paul is owing to our lack of knowledge of the early church and its liturgical tradition rather than the inherent relevance of many of the alleged traditional pieces to baptism.



The language and conceptual framework of the insertion into the catena are, on the other hand, undeniably Pauline (cf. 1 Cor. 15.42ff.; 2 Cor. 3.18; Phil. 3.21; Col. 1.15-20). Most probably he introduced the "συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης κτλ." phrase into the chain structure of vss. 29-30 as an expression of his own understanding of the eschatological destiny to which God has assigned those who are being saved.<sup>1</sup> As such, it expresses the divine πρόθεσις (vs. 28b) for those who are called into the community of God's elect, and in this respect it relates to, and to some extent, summarizes the thought of vss. 17-23 (cf. Eph. 1.4ff.)

Although the principal conception of vs. 29bc, like the whole of vss. 29-30, centers on the saving acts of God towards individual believers, it provides insight into Paul's Christological thought as well. The Son of God, sent into the world, crucified, raised from the dead, and now sovereign over the universe is the model or prototype to whose image the elect of God are conformed in order that he may be the firstborn among many brethren who share in a sonship relation with God similar to his own.

#### 1. The Present Significance of "Being Conformed to the Image of God's Son"

The words "conformed to the image of his Son, so that he may be the firstborn among many brethren" have present as well as future significance for Paul.<sup>2</sup> H.R. Balz maintains concerning Rom. 8.29bc, "Das Heil ist für die Glaubenden schon da, aber die Geschichte Gottes mit Christus und seinen Brüdern kommt erst mit der totalen Heilsverwirklichung zum Ende."<sup>3</sup> He is incorrect, however, when he says:

Christus ist hier [Rom. 8.29c] nicht als der Erstling der Verherrlichung gedacht; denn welchen Sinn hätte im Zusammenhang von Röm. 8.18ff der Hinweis auf die noch ausstehende Gleichgestaltung der Christen mit dem verherrlichten Christus? Ihre eschatologische Existenz in dieser Welt steht zur Debatte. Christus ist vielmehr der erste,

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Grayston, "Doctrine of Election," p. 578 and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 200-201. Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 73-75 and U. Luz, Geschichtsverständnis, pp. 251-252 think that even Rom. 8.29bc is traditional in origin, but their claims are unfounded as Kim has demonstrated.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 432.

<sup>3</sup>Balz, Heilsvertrauen, p. 114.

der den im Heilsplan beschlossenen Kampf gegen die Heillosigkeit der Welt exemplarisch durchgeführt hat und damit das Heil Gottes unter den Bedingungen dieser Welt schlechthin verwirklicht hat . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Balz ignores the various conceptual and linguistic similarities between Rom. 8.29bc and Phil. 3.21; 1 Cor. 15.49; and Col. 1.18, all of which concern the resurrection. He fails to give a satisfactory meaning for the term εἰκών and offers no real explanation of how conformity to the image of Christ can be a completely present eschatological experience. To have the same form of image as God's Son does not refer to having the same experience of salvation, as Balz seems to imply,<sup>2</sup> because εἰκών language relates to the outward appearances of a person which correspond to inward essences not to experiences which are similar. His rhetorical question, quoted above, cannot hide the fact that Rom. 8.18ff. concerns a future event that can only take place at the resurrection (cf. vss. 23-24), so that the real problem with Rom. 8.29bc is not how it relates to the future,<sup>3</sup> but how it relates to the present experience of the believer. Finally, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that Christ's status as firstborn among many brethren in Rom. 8.29c pertains to his being the first "der den im Heilsplan beschlossenen Kampf gegen die Heillosigkeit der Welt exemplarisch durchgeführt hat;" rather it expresses the divine purpose in God's predestining believers to be conformed to the image of his Son.

In 2 Cor. 3.18 Paul claims, "τὴν δόξαν κυρίου κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν." The phrase "the same image" relates to the preceding words "looking at the glory of the Lord as in a mirror." In 4.6 Paul speaks of the "knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" and, as we have seen before, this is closely associated with Christ the εἰκών of God in vs. 4. Thus "looking at the glory of the Lord as in a mirror" alludes to seeing Christ, the image of God, who himself reflects the glory of God, albeit in an indirect way (through the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. J. Kürzinger, "Συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (Röm 8, 29)," BZ NS 2 (1958), pp. 294-299.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Lohse, Colossians, pp. 142-143, who sees a specific future reference in Rom. 8.29 in contrast to the present reference in Col. 3.10.



preaching of the Gospel?). Vs. 18 envisions a present and continuing process of transformation into the same image of God seen in the mirror, that is, a conforming of believers to the image of God's Son.<sup>1</sup> Since an εἰκών was believed to share in the being which it represented and to reveal its true inner essence, Paul may conceive of the transformation to the same image with Christ as consisting primarily in an inward process at the present time (cf. 2 Cor. 4.16). Gal. 4.19 possibly supports this view, as well. According to this text, Paul suffers birth pains until Christ might be formed in the Galatians (μορφωθῇ χριστοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν). The similarity in thought and language between 2 Cor. 3.18 and Rom. 8.29b,<sup>2</sup> "transformed (μεταμορφοῦσθαι) to the same image (εἰκών) which Christ is" and "conformed (συνμόρφους) to the image (εἰκών) of God's Son," implies that the conformity to the image of God's Son mentioned in Rom. 8.29b is underway, in Paul's mind. Col. 3.10 firmly establishes this conclusion. This verse speaks of the new man, the Christian, "τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν." Because in Col. 1.15, as in 2 Cor. 4.4, Paul designates Christ the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, Moule and others are correct in maintaining that the κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος of Col. 3.10 refers to renewal based on Christ, the εἰκὼν of God.<sup>3</sup> The knowledge to which men are being renewed, according to the image of the creator, that is Christ, probably concerns the will of God and his divine purpose for man

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>Bultmann, Zweite Korinther, p. 98 compares 2 Cor. 3.18 with Rom. 8.29 and Phil. 3.21.

<sup>3</sup>Moule, Colossians, p. 214; Lohse, Colossians, p. 142; Hooker, "Interchange," p. 355; Kehl, Christushymnus, p. 57; and Jervell, Imago Dei, p. 218. J.B. Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 214 rejects this view primarily on account of the similarity between Col. 3.10 and Eph. 4.24. In the latter passage the expression κατὰ θεόν occurs, and Lightfoot claims that this is the equivalent of κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος in Col. 3.10. His correlation of these two phrases, however, ignores the extensive differences between the two sentences in which they occur. The new man who is to be put on in Eph. 4.24 is "τὸν κατὰ θεὸν κτίσθεντα ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας." In Col. 3.10, on the other hand, the new man is "τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν." The obvious differences forbid a too hasty identification of κατὰ θεόν with κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος; Paul's designation of Christ as the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ in Col. 1.15 tips the argument in favor of seeing εἰκὼν in Col. 3.10 as referring to Christ.

as manifested in Christ, the obedient Son.<sup>1</sup> When we return to Rom. 8 and look for the possible present significance of conformity to the image of the Son of God, one obvious factor stands out. Vss. 14-16 pronounce the elect to be already experiencing divine sonship. The present experience of sonship represents a profound inward conforming to the image of God's Son since the Son's own εἰκών is an expression of his Sonship relation with God.<sup>2</sup> The words "so that he may be firstborn among many brethren" following the "conforming statement" affirm this interpretation because they make the actual purpose of the conforming process to the image of the Son that Christ may be the prototype and have primogeniture among the sons of God. Thus the conforming process itself, in the present, has to do with making the elect, sons of God like the firstborn Son of God through a process of inward conforming and transformation in which the elect take on the characteristics of the firstborn Son of God.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. The Future Significance of "Being Conformed To the Image of God's Son"

In spite of the present conforming to the image of Christ, the ultimate completion of the process will only occur in the resurrection as Phil. 3.21 and 1 Cor. 15.42-49 indicate.<sup>4</sup> In Phil. 3.21 Paul testifies that Christ "μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ." The statement lacks the term εἰκών, but it contains the concept since the εἰκών of a person pertains, in the first instance, to his

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Lohse, Colossians, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 74 notes: "Vielfach wird der Genitiv τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ [he does not use accents or breathing marks] stillschweigend als gen. epexeg. verstanden (die Eikon sc. Gottes, die sein Sohn ist) . . ." But he ultimately rejects this view. Schlatter, Gerechtigkeit, p. 282 is correct, however, when he observes, "Aus seiner Einheit mit dem Vater erhält der Sohn sein Bild, das sein Inneres offenbart." See supra, pp 86-87 on this point. Cf. Grundmann, "Der Geist der Sohnschaft," pp. 181-184 on the significance of Rom. 8.29 for the theme of the sonship of believers.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 432.

<sup>4</sup>For other treatments aligning 1 Cor. 15.49 and Phil. 3.21 with Rom. 8.29 see Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 276-278 and R. Scroggs, The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology (1966), pp. 102-104.



visible manifestation.<sup>1</sup> In the resurrection Christ himself will transform the body of humbleness, the visible Adamic εἰκών, by conforming it (σύμμορφον) to his own glorious body, to his own visible εἰκών. Paul expresses a similar idea in 1 Cor. 15.42-49. In vs. 49 he declares of the elect that as they have born "τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ" man, they shall bear "τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου" man. The earthly man whose image they bear is none other than Adam who, as the primogenitor of the human race, passed on his εἰκών to all his descendants (cf. Gen. 5.3).<sup>2</sup> The heavenly man, whose image they shall bear is Christ, the Last Adam.<sup>3</sup> Christ, the second Adam from heaven, was raised from the dead in ἀφθαρσία, δόξη, and δυνάμει (vss. 42-43); he was thus raised as a σῶμα πνευματικόν, in contrast to the φθορά, ἀτιμία and ἀσθενεία characteristic of the σῶμα ψυχικόν engendered by the First Adam. The two opposing εἰκόνες of 1 Cor. 15.49 can therefore only be understood in terms of the σῶμα ψυχικόν and the σῶμα πνευματικόν of vs. 44 and their antithetical characteristics in vss. 42-43.

The use of εἰκών thought and language in Phil. 3.21 and 1 Cor. 15.42-49 with reference to the resurrection, when the elect will conform to or bear the εἰκών of Christ, clearly suggests that Rom. 8.29bc must have similar significance. This view of Rom. 8.29bc is further supported by Paul's use of πρωτότοκος of the resurrected Christ in Col. 1.18 and by Rom. 8.23 which equates the final manifestation of adoptive sonship with the future redemption of the body. The reason that the redeeming of the believers' bodies corresponds to the final state of adoptive sonship is presumably because only then will the sons of God completely conform to the unique Son of God by totally having the same form of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, p. 289 and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Jervell, Imago Dei, p. 258 and Balz, Heilsvertrauen, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup>Dunn, "1 Corinthians 15.45," is correct in asserting that Jesus only became Last Adam at his resurrection. The meaning of vs. 49 would be quite different if the very well attested subjunctive φορέσωμεν were accepted. It would require placing vs. 49 alongside 2 Cor. 3.18 and Col. 3.10; but an exhortation to bear the image of the heavenly man does not go well with Paul's thought here. Cf. Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 377; Robertson and Plummer, 1 Corinthians, pp. 374-375; and Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 569.

image which he now is as the resurrected and exalted Son of God.<sup>1</sup> This is undoubtedly to be understood as sharing in the divine glory which characterizes Christ's eikon (cf. vss. 17-18, 21), for, according to the concatenation in vss. 29-30 the end goal of God's saving activity can be described as glorification of the elect. This is synonymous with "being conformed to the image of God's Son," who manifests the glory of God (cf. 2 Cor. 4.4, 6). But it must be remembered that the outward appearance of an eikon corresponds to the inward essence. Thus C.F.D. Moule is right to insist that the glory which Christians are being transformed to from one stage to another (2 Cor. 3.18), and which they will come to have in a final sense when they appear with Christ in glory, is both personal and moral:

For Christians to appear with Christ in glory is the same thing as the manifestation of the Sons of God [Rom. 8.18-21]. At every point, the process is in terms of filial obedience, not<sup>2</sup> an amoral, unethical, quasi-physical transformation.

Our exposition of Rom. 8.29bc in an attempt to understand the Christological significance of "conformity to the image of God's Son" cannot end here, however. Col. 3.10 hints at another factor in the thought field of Rom. 8.29b. As was indicated above, Col. 3.10 refers to man's renewal according to Christ, the image of God. Since Paul intended to allude to Christ by the words κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος in Col. 3.10, with its obvious allusion to Gen. 1.26-27, it seems reasonable to assume that he interpreted the original creation of man κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ θεοῦ in Gen. 1.27 in terms of Christ, the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ (2 Cor. 4.6, Col.

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<sup>1</sup>Jervell, Imago Dei, p. 279 who maintains: "Positiv ausgedrückt, heisst Gottebenbildlichkeit oder Christusgleichheit, die υἱοθεσία zu bekommen, V. 23.29. Als Vorwegnahme der totalen Christusgleichheit haben wir schon πνεῦμα τῆς υἱοθεσίας, 8.15. Erst in der Auferstehung aber haben wir die υἱοθεσία, weil wir dann Christus gleich sind; wie er sind dann auch wir pneumatisch." See, however, Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 397. The problem of in what sense the believer is already the son of God and in what sense his adoption may be thought to be future will be treated more fully in the second part of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup>C.F.D. Moule, "St. Paul and Dualism: The Pauline Conception of Resurrection," NTS 12 (1965-66), p. 113. This explains why the present experience of sonship for the believer is connected with being led by the Spirit in a personal and ethical sense in Rom. 8.12ff. The present experience of sonship by believers really is part of the process of being conformed to the image of God's Son which will eventually manifest itself outwardly in the resurrection when the



1.15).<sup>1</sup> This view is strengthened by a further observation. In Col. 1.15ff. when Christ is designated the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, his role in creation is the precise focus of attention. Paul depicts Christ, the image of the invisible God, as the one through whom God created everything, so that he might have the status of πρωτότοκος with respect to the whole creation. It is but a short step from this idea to the identification of Christ as the image of God according to whom man was created in Gen. 1.27.

Now one of the well-known motifs in both apocalyptic and rabbinic writings concerns the correspondence of the end of time with the beginning of time.<sup>2</sup> This conception seems to form the background for Rom. 8.18ff., because these verses allude to the end-time restoration of the created order to the pristine state it had before God subjected it to futility on account of Adam's sin (cf. Gen. 3.17-18).<sup>3</sup> When Rom. 8.29b announces the conforming of the elect to the image of God's Son the same background is presupposed. Paul's understanding of Christ as the image of God (an idea closely related to his Sonship, as we have seen) in whose image man was originally modeled, corresponds to his role at the eschaton when he will serve as the prototype for the new image which the redeemed shall possess. The apostle's eschatological conception, which sees the future already intruding into the present, enables him to speak of the conforming process as already underway. But, and this is crucial for Paul, Christ himself differs from what he was at the time of Adam's creation. The Son of God, the true image of God, became a man subject to the limitations of human existence. Unlike the first Adam, however, he lived a life of perfect obedience (Rom. 5.19; Phil. 2.8) because he was true to his divine origin as the Son of God. He thus reversed the process whereby the first man brought ruin on his descendants

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body is redeemed and sonship is completed (Rom. 8.23).

<sup>1</sup> See supra, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> See especially Scroggs, Last Adam, pp. 23-31 and 54-58 and Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 236ff. The modern discussion of this idea, which is frequently mentioned in Pauline studies, goes back to H. Gunkel, Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit (1895).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Scroggs, Last Adam, p. 71.

(cf. Rom. 5.12-21; 1 Cor. 15.21-22). God then raised Christ from the dead, so that he has now become the Last Adam, the heavenly man whose image the elect shall bear (1 Cor. 15.45-49).<sup>1</sup>

Rom. 8.29 takes us beyond 1 Cor. 15.45-49 to the extent that it adds a crucial aspect to what conformity to the image of Christ entails. Christ was Son of God before coming into human existence; he was Son of God during his human existence; and he continues to be Son of God in the post-resurrection period. For this reason, conformity to the image of Christ, the Son of God, is conformity to his Sonship, as Rom. 8.29c makes clear. Thus believers are made to participate completely in Christ's Sonship relationship with God, though as firstborn, his uniqueness and preeminence are preserved. This represents for Paul a profound expression of both present Christian experience and the eschatological hope of the believer and must be understood to include his conviction regarding the bearing of the image of the Last Adam who, even as Last Adam, himself remains the Son of God.<sup>2</sup>

D. "Waiting for God's Son from  
Heaven": 1 Thess. 1.9-10

Paul predicates the appellation Son to Christ on only one occasion in the whole of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, but this one instance is of particular interest by virtue of the way in which he employs it. After the briefest salutation in any of his extant letters, Paul begins the letter proper with an introductory thanksgiving period, common to all of his letters except Galatians. Paul Schubert has argued that the introductory thanksgiving statement of 1 Thessalonians actually extends as far as 3.13 be-

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<sup>1</sup>Davies, Paul, p. 51 makes the important point that Christ as Second Adam was not merely a "second edition of the first Adam in his unfallen state; he was a new creation, unique."

<sup>2</sup>Thrall, "Paul's Christology," pp. 315-316 argues that Paul had integrated his belief in the divinity of Christ and his role as the model for eschatological humanity. She concludes: "It is as the Son of God that Christ provides the pattern of eschatological humanity. Thus, his divinity and his humanity are integrated in the concept of sonship." Cf. Hooker, "Interchange," pp. 357-358. Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, p. 337 thinks that elements of Adam-Christology and Wisdom-Christology are combined in Rom. 8.29f.



cause in both 2.13 and 3.9-10 Paul reiterates his thanksgiving for the Thessalonians and in 3.11-13 he offers a prayer wish such as is normally found within the introductory thanksgiving period.<sup>1</sup> Even if this form-critical observation is correct, and Ernest Best and Hendrikus Boers among others, are not convinced that it is,<sup>2</sup> the material bracketed by 1.2 and 3.13 reveals a great deal more about the Thessalonians' conversion and Paul's initial relations with them than we know about any other of his missionary churches and his initial activity with them, that is, of course, if the Book of Acts is excluded as a source.

The verses which interest us fall within a unit stretching from 1.5 to 2.12.<sup>3</sup> In this section Paul recounts the bringing of the Gospel to his readers and their response to it, as well as emphasizing the nature of his and his fellow workers' (Silas and Timothy presumably) ministry to the Thessalonians (2.1-12). Leading up to the verses of concern to us, Paul recounts how his readers' response to the Gospel became well-known not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia but everywhere (vss. 7-9a), and then in vss. 9b-10 he proceeds to detail the report of their conversion which has become widely circulated in the Christian community at large.

#### 1. 1 Thess. 1.9-10 as a Piece of Tradition

The claim is frequently put forward by scholars that vss. 9b-10 constitute some sort of non-Pauline or at least not strictly Pauline tradition. G. Friedrich has propounded the theory that these verses form "ein Tauflied hellenistischer Judenchristen" which "die

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<sup>1</sup>P. Schubert, Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings (1939), pp. 16ff. See also P.T. O'Brien, Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul (1977), pp. 143ff. Both treat the material from 1.6-2.12 and 2.14-3.8 as digressions within the thanksgiving formula.

<sup>2</sup>E. Best, The First and Second Epistle to the Thessalonians (1977), pp. 33-34 and H. Boers, "The Form Critical Study of Paul's Letters: 1 Thessalonians as a Case Study," NTS 22 (1975-76), pp. 140-153.

<sup>3</sup>This observation is based solely on content, not on form-critical considerations. Vs. 5a connects with the thought of vss. 6-10, while 5b introduces the theme of 2.1-12. The tendency among form critics to let form determine and dominate content is analogous to not seeing the forest on account of the trees.

versammelte Gemeinde begrüsst die gläubiggewordenen Täuflinge mit dem Gesang."<sup>1</sup> This theory is highly speculative and has justly met with little acceptance. As K. Wengst notes, "Friedrichs weitergehender Schluss, diese Tradition sei als Lied zu bezeichnen, dürfte angesichts der recht prosaischen Sätze allerdings kaum zutreffen."<sup>2</sup> By far the more common view is that vss. 9b-10 represent a traditional summary of the missionary preaching of the early church in the Hellenistic world in which a call was made to monotheism, as in the Jewish synagogues, and that this was followed by the proclamation concerning Christ. Because many have found a variety of un-Pauline and non-Pauline expressions in 1 Thess. 1.9-10, it is widely held that that piece was not Pauline in origin.<sup>3</sup> Best, in his commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians, conveniently brings together the salient features casting doubt on the Pauline provenance of these verses.<sup>4</sup> He observes the non-Pauline character of the words ἐπιστρέφειν, ἀληθινός, and ἀναμένειν and the un-Pauline manner of expression attendant on the use of δουλεύειν in relationship to God and not Christ, the use of ῥύεσθαι in an eschatological context, the use of ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν and the τῶν in the resurrection formula. To these he adds the absence of reference to the cross and its being "for us."

These often repeated objections to the Pauline origin of vss. 9b-10 are not nearly so convincing as their proponents

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<sup>1</sup>G. Friedrich, "Ein Tauflied hellenistischer Judenchristen: 1 Thess. 1, 9f.," TZ 21 (1965), pp. 502-516. (The quotation is from p. 516.)

<sup>2</sup>Wengst, Christologische Formeln, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>So, for example, Dibelius, Briefe des Paulus II, p. 5; U. Wilckens, Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte: Form-Traditionsgeschichtliche (1961), pp. 80-82; Hahn, Titles of Jesus, p. 286; Wengst, Christologische Formeln, p. 30; Stuhlmacher, Paulinische Evangelium, p. 259 who speaks of the long established fact; Best, Thessalonians, pp. 85-87; and B. Rigaux, Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniens (1956). pp. 388ff.

<sup>4</sup>Best, Thessalonians, pp. 85-86. Cf. Friedrich, "Tauflied," pp. 502-507.



believe.<sup>1</sup> It is furthermore possible that 1 Thess. 1.9b-10 has nothing to do with an intentional summarizing of mission preaching, Paul's or anyone else's. The conclusion that 1 Thess. 1.9b-10 is a missionary preaching summary has been stated so many times that it has become an "assured" result of scientific exegesis without actually possessing a very secure proof. This can be seen by looking at the points put forward by Best, though it should be emphasized that Best is only agreeing with what others have said. In pointing to the non-Pauline character of ἀναμένειν, ἀληθινός and ἐπιστρέφειν, Best and others ignore the presence of at least twenty-four Pauline hapax legomena in 1 Thessalonians not to mention many other words occurring only two or three times in Paul. In the case of ἐπιστρέφειν, as Best admits, the word is used in Gal. 4.9, though it refers there to a turning away from God instead of to him. To our knowledge no one claims Gal. 4.9 to be non-Pauline, so that ἐπιστρέφειν used in a "conversion" sense in that passage, rather than arguing against the Pauline origin of 1 Thess. 1.9 may actually favor it slightly. When δουλεύειν and ῥύεσθαι are said to be employed in atypical ways it begs the question of what is the genuinely typical Pauline usage of these words. δουλεύειν is used with such datives as ἁμαρτίᾳ (Rom. 6.6), πνεύματι (Rom. 7.6), νόμῳ θεοῦ (Rom. 9.25), τοῖς φύσει μηουσίνοι θεοῖς (Gal. 4.8), ἀλλήλοις (Gal. 5.13), as well as with the prepositional phrase εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (Phil. 2.22). The word only governs the term "Christ" on three occasions (Rom. 14.18; 16.18; Col. 3.24).<sup>2</sup> Thus to point to its usage in 1 Thess. 1.9 as unusual is not very meaningful. The same sort of problem is true of the other six occurrences of ῥύεσθαι. In three passages it relates to rescue from oppression and danger (Rom. 15.31; 2 Cor. 1.10; 2 Thess. 3.2), while in two other passages it pertains to what can only be described

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<sup>1</sup>For what follows, cf. T. Holz, "'Euer Glaube an Gott,' Zu Form und Inhalt 1 Thess. 1, 9f.," Die Kirche des Anfangs (1978), pp. 459ff. who is one of the very few to challenge the prevailing consensus.

<sup>2</sup>Rom. 12.11 is textually uncertain. My friend and colleague, Mr. Lionel North, who has undertaken a careful examination of Rom. 12.11, will offer very strong grounds for adopting the weakly attested καὶ ᾧ as the original reading, in his University of Durham Ph.D. thesis.

as eschatological salvation (Rom. 7.24; Col. 1.13) whether present or future. In Rom. 11.26 it is clearly future eschatological salvation that is in mind, though  $\rho\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  occurs in an Old Testament citation. In light of these observations, there is no real reason to insinuate that  $\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$  or  $\rho\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  deviates from normal Pauline usage, as though there were a technical usage for these terms in the other letters. The appeal to the plural form of  $\omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$  with  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  is hardly a weighty consideration either since Paul does use the plural form of the word (2 Cor. 5.1; Phil. 3.20; Col. 1.5, 16, 20) even though more often than not he uses the singular. As to the absence of the mention of the cross, this is only a problem if one first assumes 1 Thess. 1.9b-10 to be a summary of missionary preaching.<sup>1</sup> We shall shortly show this is not the case. Moreover, it is patently absurd to think that Paul must always include a reference to the cross in certain contexts--even when such a reference has no real value for the assertion or argument being made. Clearly the case for the non-Pauline origin of 1 Thess. 1.9b-10 is far from proven given the ambiguous character of the evidence which scholars have adduced for the theory.

Quite apart from the lack of convincing proof for the non-Pauline provenance of the verses under discussion, several factors militate against their constituting a traditional summary of missionary preaching. Vs. 9b appears to be very poorly formed if it really is a traditional formula, as is commonly maintained. The double occurrence of  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  has a harsh quality about it (you turned to God from idols to serve God . . ."), and the  $\zeta\omega\nu$  and  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\iota\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$  would arguably go better with the first  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  to contrast it with  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\omega\lambda\alpha$  than where they occur. But more importantly the context and the content argue against the preaching summary hypothesis.

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<sup>1</sup>J. Munck, "1 Thess. I.9-10 and the Missionary Preaching of Paul," *NTS* 9 (1962-63), p. 105 stands the argument of Best and others on its head by maintaining that the absence of any reference to the cross weighs against 1 Thess. 1.9-10 being a summary of Paul's missionary preaching in Thessalonica. If Paul were as single-minded in his assertions of the death of Christ on the cross in his theological statements as is often claimed, then one wonders whether he would have simply taken over a tradition that did not explicitly refer to the cross of Christ, without altering it.



Those who see a missionary preaching summary pay no real attention to what Paul purports to be offering in vss. 9-10. He claims that he is presenting the report spread by other Christians concerning the conversion of the Thessalonians. Is it any wonder then that the supposed preaching summary is not typical of what we would expect of a genuinely Pauline summary of his own preaching? Paul fully expected the Thessalonians to recognize their own conversion experience in the words of vss. 9-10. The statement concerning their turn to God from idols (vs. 9b) has long been regarded as typical of missionary preaching to Gentiles, but the fact remains that this is what the Thessalonians apparently did. Already in vs. 8 Paul spoke of their "ἡ πίστις . . . ἣ πρὸς τὸν θεόν as though it were a new phenomenon, and 2.14-16 strongly suggest that his readers were primarily Gentiles rather than Jews.<sup>1</sup> It is also clear from 1 and 2 Thessalonians that Paul's converts expectantly waited for the imminent return of Christ from heaven (cf. 1 Thess. 3.13; 4.13-5.11; 2 Thess. 1.7-8; 2.1-12) at which time they would be delivered from the divine wrath (cf. 1 Thess. 5.9; 2 Thess. 1.8). Everything which is said about Christ is connected with the infinitive ἀναμένειν, something expressing the present experience of the readers. This clearly belies the claim that vs. 10 has anything to do with an intentional summary of the Gospel.<sup>2</sup> So far as we know, not only Paul, but all segments of early Christianity believed that the Gospel message concerned the saving significance of Christ's life and death. In other words, vss. 9b-10 make for a poor summary not only of Paul's missionary preaching but of the early church's missionary proclamation as a whole. These verses are better explained if we take them at face value as an expression of the Thessalonians' conversion experience: they turned from paganism to the living and true God to serve him and to await the coming of his Son, Jesus, who would save them from the divine judgment against sin and disobedience.

Quite apart from the problem of the supposed preaching summary in vss. 9b-10, a number of scholars have found traditional Christological conceptions in vs. 10. Josef Blank thinks, "Die

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<sup>1</sup>We do not think that the evidence for supposing these verses to be a later interpolation is at all convincing.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ibid., p. 103.

Sohnesbezeichnung, die mit der Aussage der Parusie-Erwartung verbunden ist, setzt wohl die messianische Inthronisation des irdischen, von den Toten erweckten Jesus voraus."<sup>1</sup> Blank holds this position because he places 1 Thess. 1.10 on the same tradition-historical plane as Rom. 1.3-4. In this tradition-historical connection, according to Blank's conception, Jesus, the Messiah, was appointed Son of God by his resurrection from the dead. However, the linking of 1 Thess. 1.10 with the tradition embedded in Rom. 1.3-4 is tenuous. Unlike Rom. 1.3-4, nothing is said about Jesus' Davidic connection and the title "Christ" does not even appear. Blank also fails to offer any reason for connecting Messianic, more specifically, Davidic enthronement with parousia expectation.

More commonly 1 Thess. 1.10 is related to the apocalyptic Son of Man traditions found in the Gospels.<sup>2</sup> Those accepting this understanding normally claim, or assume that a terminological alteration has occurred in 1 Thess. 1.10. An original  $\delta \upsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \delta\upsilon\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon$  tradition has undergone modification to the simple  $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ , it is maintained. Mk. 13.32 is cited by some as a parallel example of this semantic shift,<sup>3</sup> and Schweizer points to Rev. 1.13-15 as an instance where the Son of God designation is equated with the term Son of Man.<sup>4</sup> Certainly the parousia thought of 1 Thess. 1.10 parallels the thought of a number of Son of Man sayings in the Gospels where the role of the Son of Man in eschatological judgment appears in the foreground (cf. Mk. 8.38; 13.24-27; 14.62; Mt. 10.23; 25.31-46; Lk. 12.40; 17.20ff.; 21.34-36). It is also true that the Son of Man terminology has links with resurrection sayings in

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<sup>1</sup>Blank, Paulus, p. 258. Cf. also Hahn, Titles of Jesus, pp. 285-286, though Hahn's view is more complex and involves the Son of Man tradition as well. Kramer, Christ, pp. 125-126 considers a Messianic Sonship tradition to be one of two possibilities for the origin of 1 Thess. 1.10.

<sup>2</sup>Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 165; Wengst, Christologische Formeln, pp. 41-42; Schweizer, " $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ ," pp. 370, 382; Loader, "Apocalyptic Sonship," p. 533; and Friedrich, "Tauflied," p. 514. Best, Thessalonians, p. 83 thinks that this is a possibility if 1 Thess. 1.10 originated in Palestinian Christianity.

<sup>3</sup>Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 165 and Best, Thessalonians, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup>Schweizer, " $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ ," p. 371.



the Gospel tradition (cf. Mk. 9.9, 31; 10.33-34). Recent studies regarding the Son of Man designation, however, have changed the whole complexion of scholarly understanding concerning one of the most perplexing and complicated issues in the investigation of the New Testament. It is impossible for us to enter into an analysis of the changing conception of the Son of Man in the Gospels and in Jewish thought and then to relate the findings to 1 Thess. 1.10.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, several points of interest may be noted. First, it now seems unlikely that the Aramaic term  $\chi\omega\ ] \ ]$  was ever a recognized title in Judaism, and second it is extremely probable that the many Son of Man sayings in the Gospels which go back to Jesus were in origin circumlocutions for the first person singular pronoun or were generic and were intended to avoid direct assertions which on some occasions might have proved offensive to Jesus' audience. With Barnabas Lindars, however, we agree that some of the Gospel occurrences of  $\acute{o} \upsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  are translations of authentic  $\chi\omega\ ] \ ]$  sayings by Jesus in which he spoke of himself as the agent of future divine intervention.<sup>2</sup> Thus when  $\acute{o} \upsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  came to have titular significance in the Greek Gospel tradition, it was an explicable, and in some senses legitimate, development from Jesus' own self-understanding.<sup>3</sup> Did Paul then change an original Son of Man saying into a Son of God saying? It is impossible to answer this with certainty, but if Paul spoke Aramaic and was familiar with the original sayings of Jesus, then he may well have known and understood the meaning of  $\chi\omega\ ] \ ]$ . If this is so, his inclusion of the terms Son of God (1 Thess. 1.10) and Lord (cf. 1 Thess. 4.16-18; 2 Thess. 1.7ff.) in material under

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<sup>1</sup>See especially G. Vermes, "The Use of  $\psi\ ] \ ]$ / $\chi\omega\ ] \ ]$  in Jewish Aramaic," Appendix E, in M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts (1967<sup>3</sup>), pp. 310-330; also G. Vermes, Jesus the Jew, pp. 160-191; idem, "The Son of Man Debate," JSNT 1 (1978), pp. 19-31; R. Leivestad, "Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man," NTS 18 (1972-73), pp. 243-267; P.M. Casey, "The Son of Man Problem," ZNW 67 (1967), pp. 147-154. M. Black, "Jesus and the Son of Man," JSNT 1 (1978), pp. 4-18; Jeremias, Theology 1, pp. 257-276; and B. Lindars, "Re-Enter the Apocalyptic Son of Man," NTS 22 (1975-76), pp. 52-72.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>3</sup>In this we are in agreement with the conclusions of Lindars, "Apocalyptic Son of Man," p. 72.

the obvious influence of parousia traditions stemming from Jesus constitutes a valid interpretation of Jesus' own intention and identity to the extent that Jesus understood himself in terms of the Danielic Son of Man. But this understanding compels us to look closely at the precise reasons for Paul's employment of the term Son (of God) in 1 Thess. 1.10 since he is, in effect, offering an explication of the parousia tradition.

## 2. The "Parousia" of the Son of God

One of the decisive features of Paul's Christology, as we have seen, was his belief that the Son of God had come into the world and had instituted eschatological salvation through his obedient life and death. According to 1 Thess. 1.10 the Son of God, whom God raised from the dead, will come from heaven to consummate eschatological salvation by saving his faithful followers from the divine wrath which will come against all unrighteousness and disobedience (cf. Rom. 1.18ff.). In almost every other parousia context Paul predicates the title "Lord" to Christ (cf. Phil. 3.20; 1 Thess. 2.19; 3.13; 4.15-17; 5.1-2, 23; 2 Thess. 1.7; 2.1),<sup>1</sup> but this is because the focus of attention is on Christ and

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<sup>1</sup>Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 302-318 presents a stimulating approach to the problem of Paul and the Son of Man designation with special reference to 1 Thess. 1.10, but also Gal. 1.16. Following the lead of other scholars, most recently, for example: M. Black, "The Throne-Theophany, Prophetic Commission and the 'Son of Man': A Study in Tradition-History," Jews, Greeks and Christians (1976), pp. 57-73, he examines the possible epiphanic origin of the Son of Man terminology. He concurs with Black and others that "the heavenly figure  $\omega\gamma\chi \gamma\alpha\delta$  in Dan. 7; 1 En 37-71; 4 Ezra 13 is a product of the hypostatization of the  $\alpha\gamma\gamma\alpha\delta \gamma\alpha\delta$  appearing in  $\alpha\gamma\chi \alpha\gamma\chi \gamma\alpha\delta \alpha\gamma\alpha\delta$  in Ezek 1.26ff.; 8.2ff., [and] seems to be the best explanation available for the use of the figure in the apocalyptic literature" (p. 310). He proceeds to argue for the possibility that "Jesus himself started the Messianic interpretation of the figure  $\omega\gamma\chi \gamma\alpha\delta$  in Dan. 7" (p. 313) and that by it he meant to refer to himself as the Son of God (pp. 315-316). On the road to Damascus, Paul, according to Kim, saw Jesus as a divine being and therefore in conjunction with epiphanic tradition perceived him to be one  $\omega\gamma\chi \gamma\alpha\delta$  (p. 316). As Kim puts it, "Paul's Damascus experience must have led him immediately to Dan. 7.13 because he saw a heavenly figure 'like a son of man' just as Daniel did. It must have also led him to understand that with the self-designation 'the Son of Man', which he in all likelihood had already known, Jesus referred to himself as the Son of God who had appeared to Daniel  $\omega\gamma\chi \gamma\alpha\delta$ ." (p. 317). This is why Paul was justified in using the designation Son of God in the parousia context of 1 Thess. 1.10,



his immediate relation to his people for whom he is Lord. Matters are different in 1 Thess. 1.9b-10. The theme of vs. 9b centers on God, the one to whom the Thessalonians turned from their former godless ways. Vs. 10 consists of an infinitive phrase and two dependent constructions explicating the words υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, the object of the infinitive ἀναμένειν; the entire verse, dependent as it is on the infinitive ἀναμένειν, is coordinated with the infinitive phrase δουλεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι καὶ ἀληθινῷ of vs. 9b. Together these two coordinate infinitive phrases express the purpose of the Thessalonians' turning towards God. It was the emphasis on God in vs. 9b and especially the turning to him from idols which led Paul to select the expression υἱὸν αὐτοῦ to identify the person whom his readers expectantly awaited. The Sonship designation has the effect of uniting Christ with God, the one to whom the Thessalonians turned in their conversion, and secondarily accounts for the reason why Jesus may be relied on for salvation from the coming wrath: just because he is the Son of God, whom God raised from the dead, he is able to save his people from the wrath of God. Rom. 5.9-10 offers a close parallel to this thought since there reconciliation through the death of God's Son assures the believer that he will be saved by the life of the Son from the wrath of God's judgment. It is not simply a question of what has been done but of the person who did it. Jesus' death and life are efficacious for saving Christians from God's judgment against unrighteousness because he is God's Son, God's agent in bringing salvation to mankind. The simple name "Jesus", identifying the Son of God who saves his people from the coming wrath, makes clear that the one coming from heaven is the same person as the historical personage whom Paul preached (cf. 2 Cor. 11.4 and 1 Thess. 4.14).

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a text related to the apocalyptic Son of Man sayings of Jesus, according to Kim. One of the principal problems with this novel approach is our lack of evidence for Paul's perceiving Christ as "one like a Son of Man" in the Damascus vision. The thesis also requires far more attention to the Son of Man problem in the Gospel traditions than Kim is able to give it, especially its relationship to the findings of Vermes.

E. "The Subjection of the Son  
To God": 1 Cor. 15.23-28

With 1 Cor. 15.23-28 we come to the last of the Pauline texts which require special examination in conjunction with the utilization of the Son of God language or idea in relation to Christ. Appropriately 1 Cor. 15.23-28 deals with the consummation of God's saving purposes not only for mankind but for all creation. As we shall see, the use of the Sonship idea at this juncture is not merely fortuitous but of the essence of Pauline Christological and soteriological thought. In 1 Cor. 15.23-28 Paul does not enter into a theoretical discussion about eschatology for its own sake; such an approach is not in keeping with his theological modus operandi in his letters. Paul is driven rather to discuss the things of the end because of a specific problem raised by the Corinthians. For this reason we must begin by examining the context into which Paul has set 1 Cor. 15.23-28 before we can offer an interpretation of the verses and their use of the Christological Sonship idea.

1. The Context

The key for understanding Paul's motivation in writing 1 Cor. 15, a chapter which focuses upon the question of resurrection, appears in vs. 12 when he poses the question: "If Christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead, how are some among you saying that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Although we have the key for understanding why Paul wrote 1 Cor. 15, the question of which door the key fits remains somewhat uncertain.<sup>1</sup> With slight variations the prevailing conception among New Testament scholars at present assumes that the Corinthians believed themselves to have been resurrected already, and therefore they found the future resurrection irrelevant.<sup>2</sup> On this view the primary

<sup>1</sup>Cf. H. Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1975), p. 250.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Kümmel in Lietzmann, Korinther, pp. 192-193; Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 169; G. Barth, "Erwägungen zu 1. Korinther 15, 20-28," Ev Th 30 (1970), p. 516; J.H. Wilson, "The Corinthians Who Say There Is No Resurrection of the Dead," ZNW 59 (1968), pp. 90-107; and Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, pp. 347-348. Wilson and Professor Barrett present and reject several other explanations of the problem engendering 1 Cor. 15.12.



goal of Paul in 1 Cor. 15 is to distinguish between present and future salvation. This interpretation is not completely satisfying, however, since it transforms Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 15.12 into one which means, "How do some of you say that you are already resurrected?"<sup>1</sup> With D.J. Doughty, we agree:

The Corinthians certainly claim the possession of salvation as a present reality. There is no indication anywhere, however, that they actually grounded this claim with the assertion that the resurrection of believers had already taken place, or that they even looked forward to the possibility of future life.<sup>2</sup>

1 Cor. 15.35 suggests that some of the Corinthians found the very idea of future resurrection difficult to swallow, and where Paul uses the verb ζωοποιήσασθαι to refer to the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15.20-23, it may imply a denial of future life altogether. On the other hand, the sardonic remarks of 1 Cor. 4.8ff. give strong grounds for believing that some of the Corinthians held a realized eschatology which may have made future resurrection irrelevant.<sup>3</sup>

Thus we concur with Doughty once again when he asserts:

The question which determines Paul's discussion in 1 Kor. 15 . . . has to do not with the presence and future of the resurrection, but rather with the reality of the resurrection and future life as such, and in this light with the meaning of Christian existence as such, in the present and in the future.<sup>4</sup>

Whatever may have been the precise origin of the belief, some among the Corinthian Christians rejected the future resurrection in favor of the full realization of salvation blessings in the present.

In the first paragraph of ch. 15, Paul employs a traditional creedal or kerygmatic formula either including or followed by a list of those seeing the risen Christ and thereby authenticating the

<sup>1</sup>The claim of Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 169 that Paul "misunderstood his opponents in attributing to them the view that with death everything is over (1 Cor. 15.19, 32)" is not very convincing. That we know Paul's opponents better than he did when he wrote 1 Cor. 15 is improbable.

<sup>2</sup>D.J. Doughty, "The Presence and Future of Salvation in Corinth," ZNW 66 (1975), p. 75.

<sup>3</sup>See A.C. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," NTS 24 (1977-78), pp. 510-526 for a convincing demonstration that the spiritual enthusiasm of the Corinthians was closely connected to a realized eschatology.

<sup>4</sup>Doughty, "Salvation in Corinth," p. 76.

reality of the resurrection. Paul appends himself to this list as <sup>2'</sup>ἐκτρωμα, and then goes on to describe his own share in the proclamation of Christ based on his encounter with the risen Christ (vss. 8-10). Vss. 13-19 proceed from the question raised in vs. 12. Paul expounds the centrality of the resurrection of Christ for the Christian faith in an attempt to drive home the logical conclusion to which those denying the resurrection of the dead must come.<sup>1</sup> In vss. 21-22 Paul introduces his conception of the corporate solidarity between Christ and his people which indicates in what sense Christ is the ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων of vs. 20. Because Christ was the first man to be raised from the dead, he occupies an analogous position in regard to the resurrection to that of Adam with respect to death.

## 2. The Question of Tradition

At this point Paul enters into the eschatological implications of the resurrection of Christ; for him the resurrection of Christ already signals the beginning of the final events leading to the consummation. Vss. 23-28 form a unity in the argument of ch. 15 by virtue of their eschatological orientation and the theological intention behind them. The term παρουσία in relation to Christ in vs. 23 and the use of τέλος in vs. 24 mark out the eschatological character of the whole paragraph. Paul employs the word παρουσία on fourteen occasions and of these, seven, including 1 Cor. 15.23, refer to the future coming of Christ (1 Thess. 2.19; 3.13; 4.15; 5.23; 2 Thess. 2.1, 8). Whether or not the term παρουσία was traditional and technical for the future coming of Christ before Paul, and it may well have been, the idea of the coming of Christ in judgment was, in all probability, part of the earliest Gospel tradition based on Jesus' own eschatological teachings. U. Luz claims to have isolated

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<sup>1</sup>Those who rejected the resurrection of the dead as a general principle apparently accepted the resurrection of Christ as a unique happening since they had accepted the Gospel proclamation of Paul which included the resurrection of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15.1ff.). Cf. Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, p. 250 who rightly observes in regard to 1 Cor. 15.2ff.: "Paul is not seeking to prove that Christ is risen. He can take this belief for granted."



two different traditions in vss. 24-27 which Paul reputedly has combined.<sup>1</sup> He finds the temporal clause "ὅταν παραδιδῶ τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ" un-Pauline<sup>2</sup> and attributes its derivation to an otherwise indeterminable Christian apocalyptic tradition.<sup>3</sup> He posits a second tradition involving the connection of Ps. 8.6 and Ps. 110.1 with the subordination of the "powers" to the exalted Christ.<sup>4</sup> Although it is possible that Ps. 8.6 and Ps. 110.1 were traditionally connected in early Christian thought,<sup>5</sup> the remainder of Luz's supposed traditions are groundless conjectures. Luz, as many other scholars, operates with presuppositions and methods which are not satisfactory for proving what he wishes to prove. It is true that Paul only uses the term βασιλεία in conjunction with Christ in Col. 1.13 (cf. Eph. 5.5) and therefore if one rejects the Pauline authorship of Colossians, as Luz does, then on the surface the link between Christ and βασιλεία is not typically Pauline. But this linguistically based assumption, when applied to the origin of 1 Cor. 15.24, overlooks the possible conceptual basis for Paul's statement. Paul speaks of the kingdom of God on nine occasions, and of these, four are in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 4.20; 6.9, 10; 15.50). Paul's belief in the Lordship of Christ as the Son of God with universal power since his resurrection from the dead (cf. Rom. 1.4; Phil. 2.9-11; 3.21) accounts sufficiently for Christ's rule over the kingdom belonging to God (1 Cor. 15.25). The apostle's theocentric orientation led him to conclude that the

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<sup>1</sup>U. Luz, *Geschichtsverständnis*, pp. 343-348. Cf. Doughty, "Presence and Future," p. 81, n. 73 who seems to accept the two traditions isolated by Luz, but questions whether or not the two were put together by Paul.

<sup>2</sup>Luz, *Geschichtsverständnis*, p. 343, n. 96 cites five pieces of evidence in favor of this view: 1) the active use of παραδιδόναι with Christ as subject only occurs one other time in Paul (Gal. 2.20); 2) this verb is never employed with respect to transference to God; 3) the kingdom of Christ is otherwise absent in the genuine Pauline letters; 4) the use of the expression God and Father without genitive attributes is not found elsewhere in Paul; and 5) Paul normally uses the combination "God and Father" in a ceremonious way but never as in 1 Cor. 15.24.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 346.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 344.

<sup>5</sup>The combining of Ps. 8.6 with 110.1 is very probably traditional, but the focus of attention on the "putting enemies under foot" clause, in relation to cosmic rulers and powers, may well be an original contribution of Paul taken up later in Eph. 1.21 and 1 Pet. 3.22.

sovereignty and power exercised by Christ in the present will be placed under the dominion of his God and Father after his triumph over all opposition to the rule of God, in order that God's rightful position over the whole of creation might be preserved (vs. 28). The other arguments for the traditional character of 1 Cor. 15.24 proposed by Luz are no more compelling. That Paul could not use the combination "God and Father" in a way slightly different from his "normal" usage is absurd. Although he does not use "God and Father" without qualifying genitives, he does use (ὁ) θεὸς πατήρ without them on several occasions (cf. Col. 3.17; 1 Thess. 1.1; 2 Thess. 1.2). Since Paul does not speak on any other occasion of the transference of the kingdom to God, it is small wonder that παραδιδόναι is not used in this way elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> There is also little or no reason to believe that someone other than Paul brought together Ps. 8.6 and Ps. 110.1 with the idea of the subjection of the cosmic "powers." Paul had every reason to do so in order to explain his conception of the sovereignty of Christ over all creation.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. 1 Cor. 15.23-24

If the issue confronting Paul in 1 Cor. 15 concerns the denial of the resurrection of the dead, then it must be asked how vss. 23-28 counter this denial. The matter is relatively straightforward in the case of vs. 23. It is linked with the thought of vss. 20-22 since in vs. 20 and 23 Christ is designated ἀπαρχή, and vs. 23 actually requires the verb ζωοποιηθήσονται from vs. 22 to be understood. Christ was the first to be made alive, then those who are at his parousia will be, each according to their own τάγμα. Lietzmann has suggested that the τέλος of vs. 24 should be translated by the concrete term "der Rest, der noch übrige letzte Teil der Menschheit," that is, those who do not belong to Christ.<sup>3</sup> This would provide the expected second group (as opposed to Christ who is an individual) to go with ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι (τάγμα referring

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<sup>1</sup>The truth is that reference to the transference of the kingdom to God is uniquely Pauline among the writers of the New Testament.

<sup>2</sup>The idea of rulers, authorities, and powers is genuinely Pauline as is Christ's superiority over them (cf. for example, Rom. 8. 38-39).

<sup>3</sup>Lietzmann, Korinther, p. 80.



to a group). The utilization of τέλος in this sense, however, has little or no linguistic support.<sup>1</sup> Professor Barrett may well be correct when he theorizes that Paul had in mind those who are alive at Christ's coming (cf. vss. 50-53; 1 Thess. 4.15ff.) and those who have already died.<sup>2</sup>

In vss. 24-28 the resurrection of Christ and of the faithful recedes into the background. Paul instead takes up the themes of the rule of Christ, the subjection of the universe to him, and Christ's own subjection to God. According to vs. 24 the τέλος of the present age comes after Christ's followers have been made alive at his coming. At the end of the present order, Christ will hand over the kingdom to his God and Father. There is no evidence here or elsewhere in Paul to show that he believed in the so-called Messianic "Zwischenreich," a kingdom existing between the parousia and the handing over of the kingdom to God.<sup>3</sup> Thus the subjugation and abolition of all rule, all authority and power is underway already and will be completed at the parousia of Christ and the final resurrection of the dead when the power of death will be broken forever.

The transfer of the kingdom to God by Christ calls for special comment. Apart from Col. 1.13, Paul always refers to the kingdom as God's,<sup>4</sup> even on the two occasions where he mentions the kingdom in a present sense (1 Cor. 4.20 and Col. 4.11). This tends to confirm that Paul identified the kingdom ruled by Christ in the present with the kingdom of God. Thus Christ carries out his present rule as God's chosen viceregent. In 1 Cor. 15.24 Paul links Christ's position as sovereign with his relation to God

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<sup>1</sup>Kümmel in Lietzmann, Korinther, p. 193; Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 356; and Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, pp. 270-271.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 355.

<sup>3</sup>Contra Lietzmann, Korinther, p. 81; Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul, p. 65-68; and Luz, Geschichtsverständnis, pp. 345-348 among others. For a sound criticism of the "Zwischenreich" idea in Paul see Davies, Paul, pp. 287ff.

<sup>4</sup>The kingdom of God's Son referred to in Col. 1.13 cannot be limited to the Church, but refers to the expanding rule of Christ which is overcoming all opposition until all rule and authority take their rightful place under his headship (cf. Col. 2.10, 15).

who is designated his Father. Although the normal qualifying genitive is absent from the God and Father expression in vs. 24, vs. 28, with its reference to the υἱός of God, makes it clear that we should supply αὐτοῦ in vs. 24.<sup>1</sup> Christ, as the Son of God, reigns in the place of God (vs. 25) until he transfers the kingdom to the direct sovereignty of God. This idea may have originated in Messianic thought,<sup>2</sup> however, for Paul, Christ does not simply reign as the Messianic Son of God. He reigns as the obedient Son of God who was Son even before he came into the world as a descendant of David (cf. Rom. 1.3-4; 8.3; Gal. 4.4). Nevertheless, with W. Thüsing, we believe that Christ only entered into his rule after his resurrection and exaltation.<sup>3</sup> The subordination of the Son to the Father implied in "παραδιδῶ τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί" becomes even more pronounced in vs. 28, and as we shall discover, concerns an idea of fundamental importance for Paul.

The second temporal clause of vs. 24, "ὅταν καταργήσῃ πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν," sets out the condition for the transferring of the kingdom to God, and therefore it is subordinate to the first ὅταν clause of vs. 24. Christ will hand over the kingdom to his Father when he has abolished all other forms of rule, authority, and power which operate independently of God and against the divine will. Paul does not define what he means by the terms ἀρχή, ἐξουσία, and δύναμις. In fact he probably does not have three separate and distinct categories in mind. Nevertheless, it is clear from other passages in Paul (e.g. Rom. 8.38-39; 1 Cor. 2.6; Gal. 4.9; Col. 2.15) that these are cosmic powers in rebellion against the will of God.<sup>4</sup> Vs. 26, where the verb καταργεῖν is

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Robertson and Plummer, 1 Corinthians, pp. 354-355, and Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 356.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Blank, Paulus, pp. 255-256. Lohse, Colossians, p. 38, n. 43, following the lead of H.A. Wilcke, points out that since the Messianic rule only begins at the parousia in apocalyptic literature, the "kingdom" in 1 Cor. 15.24 cannot be directly related to that idea.

<sup>3</sup>Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 240. The fact that the Son of God hands over the kingdom to God (vs. 24) and subordinates himself to the Father so that God may be all in all (vs. 28) presupposes the temporal limitation of his Lordship, that is, his standing in the place of God. The importance of this conception was shown in our discussion of Phil. 2.6-11.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. W. Foerster, "ἐξέστιν, ἐξουσία κτλ.," TDNT 2, pp. 571-573.



repeated, singles out death as the last great δυνάμεις to be destroyed.

#### 4. 1 Cor. 15.25-28

Vs. 25 picks up the thought of the two temporal clauses of vs. 24 confirming the divine necessity of Christ's rule over the kingdom of God until complete victory is achieved against every enemy of God. As is well-known, the second part of vs. 25 represents a somewhat modified form of the last part of Ps. 110.1. Originally Ps. 110.1 came into Christian usage as a Messianic proof-text. Perhaps its position as the most frequently quoted or alluded to Christological text of the Old Testament goes back to its usage by Jesus himself from whom it was then taken up by the early Christian community.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of this, in 1 Cor. 15.25 Paul at best merely assumes the Messianic use of Ps. 110.1 and completely subordinated this to his theological intention,<sup>2</sup> the establishment of vs. 24 and the preparation for vss. 26-27a. The word πάντα has already occurred twice in vs. 24 and the neuter πάντα occurs seven times in vss. 27 and 28. What makes this interesting is the fact that Paul has inserted into the modified quotation of Ps. 110.1c, in vs. 25, the word πάντας before τοὺς ἐχθρούς.<sup>3</sup> Paul seems intent on emphasizing the completeness of Christ's rule over all opposition to God. The significance of this will become clear in a moment.

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<sup>1</sup>This would explain why it became a favorite Messianic text of the early church even though it does not appear to have been Messianic in contemporary Judaism. W.R.G. Loader, "Christ at the Right Hand--Ps. CX.1 in the New Testament," NTS 24 (1977-78), p. 199, however, thinks that the Psalm was already being used with reference to the Messiah and that Christians simply took it over. But he gives no real evidence in support of this claim.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. E.E. Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity (1978), p. 204.

<sup>3</sup>The subject of the verb θῆ in vs. 25 appears to be Christ on the basis of grammatical considerations. Cf. Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, p. 273. Several factors militate against this view. In the first place, in Ps. 110.1 it is God who is the subject of the verb "θῶ." Therefore anyone familiar with the Psalm would have tended to relate it to God (cf. Eph. 1.20-23). Second, in vss. 27b-28 it becomes clear that Paul conceived God to be the one subjecting all things to Christ. This understanding is further attested in Col. 2.15. In light of these considerations, Paul may have understood God to be the subject of θῆ in vs. 25. So Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 358 and Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 240.

Paul reaches the real crux of his argument in vss. 26-27a when he declares: "Death, as the last enemy, is brought to nought; for he has subjected all things under his feet." The last enemy to be put under Christ's feet, under his sovereignty, is death.<sup>1</sup> Professor Barrett suggests that the verb καταργεῖσθαι, in this context, should be taken "to mean not so much 'to annihilate' as 'to rob of efficacy,'" and therefore it is possible that "death continues to exist, no longer as an effective enemy (to God) but as an instrument in his hands."<sup>2</sup> The breaking of the power of death occurs at the final resurrection, though Paul does not make this clear until vss. 54ff. The quotation of Ps. 8.6 in vs. 27a underscores the point already made by the modified citation of Ps. 110.1c. But by placing it after vs. 26, which mark out death as the last enemy to undergo subjugation, and by using *καὶ* as a continuative conjunction, Paul stresses in an emphatic way that death is one of the constituent elements of the πάντα of vs. 27a (note its emphatic position in the sentence) which God will subject under the rule of Christ.<sup>3</sup> The difficult problem of the origin of the Christological usage of Ps. 8.6 need not concern us here; Paul simply assumes it as he did in the case of Ps. 110.1 in vs. 25 (cf. Eph. 1.20-22; 1 Pet. 3.22; Heb. 1.13-2.9).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The description of death as the "ἔσχατος ἐχθρός" ties the thought of vs. 26 very closely with the temporal clause of vs. 25 and the theme of the subjugation of all hostile powers to the rule of Christ.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 358.

<sup>3</sup>Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, p. 274 describes the quotation of Ps. 8.6 in vs. 27a as a "retrospective proof of vs. 26." Vs. 28 reveals that the aorist and perfect tenses of ὑποτάσσειν in vs. 27 are to be understood as proleptic.

<sup>4</sup>The conception of Robertson and Plummer, 1 Corinthians, pp. 356-357, held by others as well, that the citation of Ps. 8.6 is connected with Paul's Adamic Christology in 1 Cor. 15.20-22 has no real basis in fact. Paul does not make the connection and for all practical purposes such a connection is irrelevant to the real point he wishes to make. If Paul knew the Son of Man Christology it is just as plausible, if not more so, that he understood Ps. 8.6 in terms of the Gospel designation "the Son of Man." Loader, "Apocalyptic Sonship," p. 532 thinks this is a possibility. Cf. Kim, Exposition of Paul's Gospel, pp. 232-235, and 313ff. who tries to connect up both Adamic Christology and Son of Man Christology. He thus takes Ps. 8 in both directions. See A. Vögtle, "'Der Menschensohn' und die paulinische Christologie," Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internation-



If vss. 26-27a form the high point in Paul's argument of vss. 23-28, what exactly has he proven against those who deny the resurrection? Conzelmann claims that Paul intended in vss. 23-28 to use the "apocalyptic order as an argument for the resurrection."<sup>1</sup> He fails to make clear, however, the sense in which the apocalyptic order provides a convincing argument for the resurrection. Normally those who see the problem behind ch. 15 as involving the belief of some at Corinth that they had already experienced the resurrection, simply understand vss. 23-28 as an attempt to distinguish between present and future.<sup>2</sup> This overlooks, or more correctly ignores, the principal thrust of the paragraph (vss. 23-28). It deals with the sovereignty of Christ, his subjection and destruction of hostile powers and the subordination of Christ to God.<sup>3</sup> The significance of the last theme will be elucidated later. The argument of Paul, as we have said, reaches its high point in vss. 26 and 27a. Paul maintains death, like everything else will be subjected to the rule of Christ and be stripped of its independent power, because Christ will reign until every force opposing the rule of God has been brought low (vs. 25). The autonomous power of death must be rendered ineffectual, if Christ is to reign with unchallenged universal sovereignty. How does this counter the Corinthians' denial of the resurrection? Paul has made their denial of the resurrection tantamount to a denial of the Lordship of Christ and of the dominion of God as well.<sup>4</sup> As G. Barth has observed: "Wer die Auferstehung der Toten

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alis Catholicus 1961 (1963), pp. 199-218 on the problem of the Son of Man designation in Paul in general and the use of Ps. 8.6 in particular. He does not think that anything can be proven from Paul's use of Ps. 8.6 in 1 Cor. 15.27 regarding either the Son of Man Christology or Adamic Christology.

<sup>1</sup>Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, pp. 269ff.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 226, n. 2 for those holding this view. G. Barth, as we shall see, is an exception.

<sup>3</sup>Vss. 23-28 certainly countervail an overly realized eschatology, but they also are directed to the specific problem of the denial of the resurrection.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Barth, "Erwägungen," p. 523-525 and Luz, Geschichtsverständnis, pp. 348-349 who takes a similar position.

leugnet und also die Überwindung des Todes von der Herrschaft Christi ausnimmt, der bestreitet das πάντα [of vs. 27a], der leugnet, dass Christus alles unterworfen werden muss."<sup>1</sup> The resurrection of those who are Christ's constitutes the final conquest of the terrible power of death, the subjection of death to the rule of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Without the resurrection, death remains the victor; with the resurrection the victory of death is snatched away, and death is rendered powerless (cf. vss. 52-55). Because the resurrection is essential for breaking the power of death and bringing to fruition the unchallenged sovereignty of Christ, Paul has succeeded in showing that those who deny the resurrection also deny the Lordship of Christ. He has proven the theological necessity of the resurrection, if the universal Lordship of Christ is to be maintained.<sup>3</sup>

Having achieved the goal of his argument in vs. 27a, Paul adds an important qualification to his argument lest he be misinterpreted. God, the one subjecting all things to Christ, is excepted from the otherwise universally inclusive category of things which will be subjected to Christ. But Christ's dominion in the place of God has limitations, albeit temporal ones, and thus in vs. 28 Paul returns to the theme of vs. 24a. In doing so he takes us to the end of redemptive history and reveals to us one of the most fundamental of factors in his theological thought.<sup>4</sup>

In vs. 28 Paul reintroduces a temporal schema (ὅταν . . . τότε . . .) which by virtue of the content of the verse must be seen as taking place at the "end" after everything has been subjected to Christ (vs. 28a) and at the time when Christ will hand over the kingdom to God (vs. 24). What Paul says is: ὅταν δὲ ὑποταγῇ

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<sup>1</sup>Barth, "Erwägungen," p. 523. <sup>2</sup>Luz, Geschichtsverständnis, p. 349.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Barth, "Erwägungen," p. 524.

<sup>4</sup>If vss. 25-27a constitute the real keynote to the argument of vss. 23-28, and vs. 27b provides an important and necessary qualification, vs. 28 has a certain independent character. It does continue on with the thought of vs. 27b, but it is unnecessary for the argument. In a sense vs. 24a makes the same point as vs. 28. What we are suggesting is that vs. 28 allows us an almost gratuitous glimpse into the inner workings of Paul's theology, and what we see is the true theocentricity of his thought. On this theme in 1 Cor. 15.24, 28 see Thüsing, Per Christum, pp. 239-254.



αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, τότε αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, ἵνα ᾗ ὁ θεὸς πάντα ἐν πασίν. At the end Christ not only transfers the kingdom to the sovereignty of God, but he also is subjected to God in order that the rightful reign of God over all things may begin, as was intended from creation (cf. Rom. 11.36).<sup>1</sup>

The choice of the term "Son" in 1 Cor. 15.28 is hardly a matter of chance. Paul uses the absolute ὁ υἱός, setting it off with the intensive pronoun αὐτός, instead of qualifying it with the customary αὐτοῦ [= God's] because in his mind the entire discussion in vss. 23-38 specifically focuses on the one who is Son of God. The rule of Christ over the kingdom, the neutralization of hostile rulers, authorities, and powers, and the subjugation of every enemy, including death, under his dominion occur because he is the obedient Son of God who has worked as God's unique agent and representative in creation and redemption.<sup>2</sup> For Paul, Christ was Son of God before his human existence (Gal. 4.4; Rom. 8.3), during it (Rom. 5.10; 8.32), and now in his present position as exalted sovereign (Rom. 1.4; 1 Thess. 1.10). That Paul resorts to the Sonship idea in 1 Cor. 15.24, 28 when he treats the end of the present order, reveals its foundational character for his thought. Christ's relationship with God and his function in God's redemptive purposes are, in the final analy-

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<sup>1</sup> Although Paul uses the passive future ὑποταγήσεται with reference to Christ's subjection to God, it does not imply that God has to force the Son into subjection in the same way that the hostile cosmic powers must be subjected. The obedience of the Son dictates that he willingly offers himself in subordination to the Father. Cf. Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 360. The phrase ᾗ ὁ θεὸς πάντα ἐν πασίν is not mystical in outlook nor does it lead to the "threshold of a complete eschatological absorption of the Son in the Father," as Cullmann, Christology, p. 248 suggests. "That God may be all in all" refers to God's restored sovereignty over the whole creation and is therefore soteriological in orientation. Cf. Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians, p. 275; Professor Barrett, 1 Corinthians, p. 361; and Thüsing, Per Christum, pp. 343-346.

<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered from our examination of Phil. 2.6-11 that Christ entered into the position of sovereign to whom worship was due at his exaltation and that this was the very thing he refused to grasp in his pre-existence. S. Hanson, The Unity of the Church in the New Testament (1946), p. 100 maintains with respect to 1 Cor. 15.24-28 that vs. 24a "implies that Christ, having hitherto represented God, will cease to be His representative. He will enter into the same relationship to God as others, though certainly as πρῶτότοκος (Rm. 8:29), still being the First and Greatest." It is true to say that his representative role will end, but those who are his will enter into his Sonship relation with God; he will not enter into a different relationship with God, as Hanson seems to imply.

sis, inextricably connected to his Sonship.<sup>1</sup> This is why when Paul comes to the final event in redemption history, before the complete and uncontested rule of God begins, he speaks of an act involving αὐτὸς ὁ υἱός. The final drama in God's redemption of mankind and the universe (cf. Rom. 8.19-23) concerns the Son obediently subjecting himself to the one subjecting all things to him, in order that God may be all in all, in order that he may rule as the unchallenged universal sovereign.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter we have examined five Christological Sonship texts which are primarily oriented towards the Son of God in the present and in the future. Several Sonship passages already discussed in previous chapters impinged upon the theme of this chapter (Rom. 1.3-4; Gal. 1.16; Phil. 2.6-11; and Col. 1.13-20), but the passages treated in this chapter relate almost exclusively to the theme of the Son of God in the present and in the future. Both 1 Cor. 1.9 and Gal. 4.6 concern the Son of God's relation with those whom he died to save. The Christian has a living fellowship with the Son of God who is his Lord (1 Cor. 1.9), and this through the work of the Holy Spirit who, as the Spirit of the Son, himself works sonship in believers (Gal. 4.6; cf. Rom. 8.14-16). For the Christian salvation can be described as a process of conforming to the image of the Son of God so that he, the Son, might be the firstborn among many brothers, who themselves have become sons of God (Rom. 8.29). The Spirit, who, as we have said, Paul identifies as the Spirit of God's Son, is presently working in believers to conform them inwardly to Christ's Sonship (Rom. 8.12-16). In the resurrection

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<sup>1</sup>Cullmann, Christology, pp. 293-294 claims of 1 Cor. 15.28; "Here lies the key to all New Testament Christology. It is only meaningful to speak of the Son in view of God's revelatory action, not in view of his being. But precisely for this reason, Father and Son are really one in this activity. Now we can say of the 'Son of God' what we said earlier of the Logos: he is God as God reveals himself in redemptive action." This statement reflects Cullmann's functional view of Christology, and is essentially correct. For Paul, the Son of God is the one in whom God reveals himself in redemptive history. Nevertheless, even though Paul is not interested in "ontological questions about Christ," the view he presents of Christ implies a certain ontological understanding of Christ.

<sup>2</sup>For an orthodox attempt to explain Christ's position after the transfer of power to God, see Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 560-562, but such discussions remain speculative since Paul has nothing to say on the subject.



conformity shall be completed through final adoption, the redemption of the body (Rom. 8.23). Then the sons of God will not only be like Christ in obedience to God, but they shall be outwardly glorified to correspond to the Son's appearance as the image of God. Naturally this theme concerning believers as the sons of God will receive greater attention in part two of the thesis.

Not only is a process of conformity to the unique Son of God under way, according to Paul, but Christians eagerly await the coming of the Son of God from heaven (1 Thess. 1.10). The parousia of the Son of God from heaven, in all probability, must be connected with the final subjection of all things to him (1 Cor. 15.24-28). Until that time the Son of God rules as the sovereign Lord of the universe in the place of God himself; when that time comes the Son will return the Kingdom to his Father and will himself be subjected to the rule of God as his obedient Son. Thus at every stage in the world's existence Paul acknowledges that the one who became the man Jesus Christ was God's Son. Because he was God's Son in a unique way, he shared with God in creation and redemption. Apart from his Sonship relation with God, it is impossible to understand the person and place of Jesus Christ in Paul's Christology and soteriology.

#### F. Conclusion to Part One

Having examined the Christological Son of God passages in Paul, we are now, by way of concluding part one, in a position to offer a brief systematic statement concerning the meaning and significance of Christ's divine Sonship in Pauline theology.

The divine Sonship of Christ has a profound importance for Paul because it characterizes the relation between God and Christ which is necessary for appreciating the position and work of Christ in creation and redemption. For this reason the designation "Son of God" (and its equivalents) in Paul may not be understood simply as an honorific title. Paul believed that Christ was the unique Son of God at all times. He believed that he was the unique Son of God in relation to his roles as agent in creation and redemption, and in his present position of universal sovereign. Thus Christ's divine Sonship provides an important inclusive category within Paul's Christological thought and a crucial key to his soteriological thought.

The origin of Paul's belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is

to be traced to the Christophany which he experienced on the road to Damascus. According to Paul, God revealed his Son in him in order that he might preach him (God's Son) to the Gentiles. From this starting point the whole of Paul's Christological thought developed. The crucial factor, from our perspective, is that he himself describes this as a revelation of God's Son. In other words, the divine Sonship of the resurrected Jesus Christ was the beginning point from which all of Paul's Christian thought sprang.

Although the letters of Paul are not given to flights of recondite speculation regarding the pre-existence of Christ, Colossians shows that Paul held Christ, the visible εἰκὼν of God, in whom and through whom and for whom all things were created, to be the Son of God (Col. 1.15-17). The place which Paul ascribes to the pre-existent image of God in Col. 1.15-17 is almost certainly based on the position of Wisdom and Logos in Jewish cosmological speculation. For Paul, however, the mediator or agent of God's creative acts is not a personified or hypostatized attribute of God but a divine person whom he calls the Son of God and whom he believes became the man Jesus when God sent him into the world to bring about eschatological salvation (cf. Gal. 4.4; Rom. 8.3 and Phil. 2.6-8). Christ's Sonship relation to God is presupposed by Col. 1.15-17 in its connection with 1.13-14 and provides the necessary assumption for his role as God's agent in creation. That God created all things for him (Col. 1.16) attests God's love for his Son, because creation itself is intended for God's Son as an inheritance (cf. Rom. 8.17; Col. 1.13; 1 Cor. 15.24-27; and Heb. 1.2).

When the fullness of time arrived, the time appointed by God to bring about his saving work, he sent his own Son into human existence as his representative and agent for accomplishing the work of salvation (Gal. 4.4; Rom. 8.3; cf. Rom. 1.3). The Son, who existed in the form of God, emptied himself of his divine glory and his prerogative to be served in order to become a servant vis-à-vis God. Having become a man, the Son remained true to his divine origin. He was obedient to the will of God, even unto his death on the cross (cf. Phil. 2.8; Rom. 5.19). For this reason the Son of God never came under the power of sin in his flesh (cf. Rom. 8.3); he remained sinless (cf. 2 Cor. 5.21), and therefore he was able to accomplish God's saving work, as God's unique incarnate representative. Without



Christ's divine Sonship, Paul's entire Christologically grounded soteriology would be inconceivable because it is the Sonship relation and status which Christ has with God that places him on God's side in the work of salvation, even as a man. God demonstrated his love for sinners in the death of Christ precisely because Christ was his Son (cf. Rom. 5.8; 8.32). Christ was able to effect justification, redemption and reconciliation for sinners for the reason that as the Son of God he represented God in his death (cf. Rom. 5.9-10; Gal. 4.4-5). That God demonstrated his own righteousness in the blood of Christ in order that he might be both righteous and justify the man who believes in Christ (Rom. 3.25-26) presupposes Christ's Sonship relation with God. Thus in the theology of the cross, Paul's Theocentric, Christocentric, and soteriological thought come together in conjunction with the Father-Son relation of God and Christ. This is why Paul specifically claims that he preaches the Gospel of God's Son (cf. Rom. 1.1-4, 9; 2 Cor. 1.19; Gal. 1.16).

God did not allow death to have the victory over his Son. He raised his Son from the dead and exalted him to his present position of Lordship giving him the name above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God his Father (Phil. 2.9-11). Although Paul refers to the Lord Jesus Christ in a context concerned with his incarnation (2 Cor. 8.9) and says the rulers of this age would not have crucified the Lord of glory if they had recognized him (1 Cor. 2.8), he nevertheless, apparently believed that Christ's reign as the ruler of the universe to whom God will subject everything only began with his resurrection and exaltation. To the extent that Christ now rules the universe in the place of God, and receives worship due rightfully to God, it is because he is the obedient Son of God (cf. Rom. 1.4; 1 Cor. 15.24-27; Col. 1.13). According to Paul's Theocentric thought, when the end comes and the Son of God comes for his people (1 Thess. 1.10) and all things have been subjected to his rule, then the Son will be subjected to God so that God may reign over his creation (1 Cor. 15.28).

In the present time, Christians have fellowship with the Son of God (1 Cor. 1.9). They know and experience the Son of God in their lives through the Holy Spirit, whom the apostle identifies as the Spirit of God's Son (Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.9-10). The Spirit of the Son

effects divine sonship in believers as a part of the present process of conformity to the image of the Son of God. This process of conformity to the Son of God will ultimately culminate in the completion of adoption when the sons of God will conform inwardly and outwardly to the unique Son of God who now reigns as the Lord of the universe (Rom. 8.29). Thus at the personal level Christ's Sonship relation and status with God has everything to do with the salvation destiny which God intends for those who believe.

Thus from beginning to end and through and through Paul's Christology and soteriology are dominated by the apostle's belief that Jesus Christ was, is and shall remain the Son of God. The place of Christ in creation and redemption depend upon his being the unique Son of God.

We must now turn to the other side of the divine sonship theme in Paul for, as we have already seen, Christ's divine Sonship ineluctably leads to the believer sonship conception in Paul.



PART TWO

THE SONS OF GOD IN PAULINE THEOLOGY

## CHAPTER VIII

### BELIEVERS, THE SONS OF GOD: AN INTRODUCTION

The apostle Paul not only believed and taught that Jesus Christ was the unique Son of God, he also believed and taught that one of the effects of the redemptive work of Christ was to make possible the adoptive divine sonship of all who believe in Christ, regardless of their physical connection with the Jewish people, who were the sons of God according to the Old Testament and post-Old Testament Jewish thought. Although God is frequently referred to as the Father of Christians in the letters of Paul, almost all of these occurrences are in formulary phrases,<sup>1</sup> especially in the proems of the letters, or are for emphasis in solemn statements.<sup>2</sup> Such references to the Fatherhood of God tell us little about Paul's believer sonship conception except that it may have played a more prominent part in the preaching and teaching of the apostle than we might be led to believe by a cursory reading of his letters. With two insignificant exceptions,<sup>3</sup> Paul's use of the sonship idea with reference to believers is confined to four chapters: Romans 8 and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rom. 1.7; 8.15; 1 Cor. 1.3; 2 Cor. 1.2; Gal. 1.3,4; 4.6; Phil. 1.2; 4.20; Col. 1.2; 1 Thess. 1.3; 2 Thess. 1.1, 2; Phm. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1 Thess. 3.11; 3.13; 2 Thess. 2.16. The only specific reference to God's Fatherhood of Christians which is neither part of a formulary phrase nor used for emphasis in solemn pronouncement is 2 Cor. 6.18, but this is part of an Old Testament citation. On 2 Cor. 6.18 see the following note.

<sup>3</sup> In Phil. 2.14-15 Paul instructs his readers to "do everything without grumbling and dispute, in order that you may be faultless and pure, blameless children (τέκνα) of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." The sonship statement is not intrinsic to the argument of the passage, and therefore we shall only touch on it in conjunction with our discussion of Rom. 8.12-14, a passage concerned with the ethical aspect of believer sonship. 2 Cor. 6.18 applies what looks to be an Old Testament allusion based on 2 Sam. 7.14, but since it occurs in a series of Old Testament quotations and no particular stress is laid on it we need not concern ourselves with this text. We should perhaps say in passing that the frequent assertion that 6.14-7.1 is a non-Pauline fragment is not completely convincing. Cf. Professor Barrett, 2 Corinthians, pp. 193ff.



9, and Galatians 3 and 4. But the very places and ways in which he employs the sonship conception give it a position of importance in his theological thought which has not always been appreciated.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of part two of this thesis is to examine Paul's use of the believer sonship language and conception in Gal. 3-4 and Rom. 8-9 in an attempt to determine how it is employed and what significance it has for the apostle. It is our contention that the sonship of believers was an idea of major importance for Paul because it expressed the relational and ethical character of salvation and because it was an inclusive idea relating to both the present and future character of eschatological salvation.

As in the study of the Sonship of Christ, our approach to the believer sonship texts will be exegetical in orientation. By this procedure we hope to avoid forcing a preconceived understanding upon Paul. Since in both Romans and Galatians the believer sonship conception is used in the context of Paul's theological argumentation, occurring at particularly decisive junctures, it is necessary to examine the contexts in which the conception is used for clues to its place and significance in the apostle's thought. But before we turn to our exegetical study of believer sonship in Paul, we must first investigate the background of this idea in order to see Paul's thought within its historical context.

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<sup>1</sup>The only major treatment of the believer sonship theme in Paul known to us is J.L. De Villiers, Die betekenis van (HUIOTHEIA) in die briewe van Paulus (1950), but we have not had access to this work. (It is referred to by Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 197ff.)

## CHAPTER IX

### THE BACKGROUND TO PAUL'S

#### BELIEVER SONSHIP CONCEPTION

The study of the background and possible sources of influence on Paul's believer sonship conception presents nothing like the complexities and problems connected with Christological Sonship. No one, to our knowledge, doubts that the essential background of Paul's believer sonship idea lies in the Old Testament and Judaism, though it should be added that Jesus' teaching concerning the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of God's people undoubtedly also played a role in the development of Paul's thought. In the pages which follow we shall examine the Old Testament, post-Old Testament Judaism, and the Synoptic Gospels in order to provide a framework in which Paul's believer sonship material may be understood. It must be kept in mind, however, that the sonship idea cannot be dissociated from the Fatherhood of God either in the background material or in Paul himself.

#### A. The Old Testament

The application of the Father-son language to describe the relationship between God and his people Israel never attained a position of dominance in the Old Testament; rather it simply remained one of several relational motifs or images available for describing God's relation with his people. Other such motifs included the covenant relationship, the idea of the master and his servants, the king and his subjects, the husband and his wife, and the shepherd and his sheep. A number of scholars consider the Father-son motif to be a rare one in the Old Testament,<sup>1</sup> but this is inaccurate.

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. G.E. Wright, "The Terminology of Old Testament Religion and its Significance," Journal of Near Eastern Studies 1 (1942), p. 406; O. Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12. A Commentary (1972), p. 8; C. Westermann, Isaiah 40-66. A Commentary (1969), 393; The only person voicing a definite objection to this view, as far as we are aware, is G. Fohrer, "υἱός," TDNT 8, p. 351, n. 106.



The Old Testament contains fifteen explicit allusions to God as Father, though five of these are with reference to God's Fatherhood of the king. These allusions are as follows: Dt. 32.6; Jer. 3.4 3.19; 31.9; Isa. 63.16 (twice); 64.7; Mal. 1.6; 2.10; Ps. 68.5; 2 Sam. 7.14; 1 Chr. 17.13; 22.10; 28.6; and Ps. 89.26.<sup>1</sup> If these passages represented all of the available evidence, one might well agree that a real paucity of references exists; however besides the above allusions to the Fatherhood of God, twenty-one different passages (twenty-nine actual usages) speak of God's son or sons in a direct way: Ex. 4.22-23; Dt. 14.1; 32.6, 18-20, 43;<sup>2</sup> Is. 1.2, 4; 30.1, 9; 43.6; 45.11; 63.8; Jer. 3.14, 19, 22; 4.22; 31.20; Ezek. 16.21; 21.10; 23.4, 37; Hos. 1.10; 11.1; Mal. 1.6; 2.10; Ps. 2.7; 73.15; and 80.15-16.<sup>3</sup> There are also five clearly metaphorical texts in which God is said to be like a Father or to have Fatherly feelings, or Israel is compared to a son: Dt. 1.31; 8.5; Mal. 3.17; Ps. 103.13; and Prov. 3.11-12. This evidence indicates that the Father-son motif was known and used in Israel for God's relationship to his people, and not altogether infrequently. Several factors, however, appear to have prevented it from becoming a dominant image in Israel's religious thought.<sup>4</sup> In the first place, the Father-son image never developed into a fixed concept designating the quintessence of Israelite faith in Yahweh, as the covenant idea did in the Deuteronomic tradition. While its antiquity and continued usage throughout the period of the Old

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<sup>1</sup>The last five are in conjunction with the king of Israel and therefore belong more to the Messianic Sonship background than to the believer sonship background. Having said this, however, the 2 Sam. 7.14 passage is interpreted in a believer sonship sense in 2 Cor. 6.18

<sup>2</sup>The Masoretic text of Dt. 32.43 appears to be defective. On the basis of the LXX and a 4Q document from Qumran, it seems probable that the passage originally referred to Israel's sonship. See P. Winter, "Der Begriff 'Söhne Gottes' in Moseleid Dtn. 32.1-43," ZAW 67 (1955), pp. 41-44.

<sup>3</sup>It is worth noting that in a majority of the passages where the Father-son terminology appears, God is either directly or indirectly the speaker. These passages include: Ex. 4.22, 23; Hos. 11.1; 13.13; Is. 1.2, 4; 30.1, 9; 43.6; 45.11; 63.8; Jer. 3.14, 19, 22; 4.22; 31.9, 20; Ezek. 16.21; 21.10; 23.4, 37; Mal. 1.6; 2 Sam. 7.14; 1 Chr. 17.13; 22.10; 28.6; Ps. 2.7; and 89.26.

<sup>4</sup>Perhaps the most common explanation for the relative infrequency of the Father-son terminology in the Old Testament involves the claim that Canaanite myths regarding the natural begetting of humans by the cultic deities resulted in an avoidance of the idea in Israelite religion. See for example, Westermann, Isaiah 40-66, p. 393; Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12,

Testament may not be disputed, it only became popular during the period of the prophets when an acute need arose for images and metaphors to emphasize the personal and ethical character of Yahweh's relationship with his people. But even during this period it was only one of several images such as the master-servant and husband-wife images. No less significant in accounting for its lack of usage is the fact that the much more prevalent idea of Israel as "God's chosen people" (179) conveyed much the same idea as the Father-son concept;<sup>1</sup> both stressed dependence, obedience, elective love, and the covenant. In fact these very ideas represent the theological essence of the Old Testament's use of the Father-son motif.

Deuteronomy 32 contains what are probably some of the oldest instances in the Old Testament of the Father-son imagery being applied to God and Israel.<sup>2</sup> The Song of Moses has for its theme the saving activity of Yahweh in the history of his people. Within the Song's salvation historical framework the Father-son motif occurs at three key places: in vss. 5-6 where the charge of unfaithfulness by Israel is first raised; in vss. 18-20 where the transition from Israel's rejection of God to God's rejection of Israel occurs; and in vs. 43 where Israel's restoration and vindication are assured. The usage made of the Fatherhood of God in vs. 6 (cf. vs. 18) is foundational for a proper understanding of the Father-son relationship in the Old Testament. This verse conceives God to be a Father standing at the beginning of the historical existence of the nation of Israel in

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p. 8; Wright, "Terminology," pp. 410ff.; and Fohrer, "ὁὶός," pp. 352-353. Against this view is the observation of Marchel, Abba, pp. 42-43 that it was during the period of greatest resistance to pagan religion (the eighth and seventh centuries), that the prophet Hosea and succeeding prophets took up the Father-son motif and developed it. From the earliest Old Testament usages of the Father-son idea (Ex. 4.22 and Dt. 32) forward, God's Fatherhood and Israel's sonship were grounded in the process of history and not myth.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. P. Baur, "Gott als Vater im AT," Theologische Studien und Kritiker 72 (1899), p. 485 and D.J. McCarthy, "Notes on the Love of God in Deuteronomy and the Father-Son Relationship between Yahweh and Israel," CBQ 72 (1965) p. 147. Several passages appose the Father-son terminology with the idea of Israel as God's people: Dt. 14.1, 2; 32.6; Is. 1.2-4; 30.9; Jer. 4.22; and Hos. 1.10.

<sup>2</sup>See O. Eissfeldt, The Old Testament. An Introduction (1965), p. 227.



the same way that a human father stands at the beginning of his son's life. In vs. 6 three words are utilized to describe the nature of Yahweh's Fatherhood of Israel:  $\text{נָּתַן}$ ,  $\text{יָצַק}$ , and  $\text{יָדָה}$ . God created, made, and established Israel as his son. These are not terms connected to the biological sphere, but words tied to creation.<sup>1</sup> In the first instance, then, Yahweh's Father-like relation to the people resulted from his having created the people as a nation. Because he was a Father to the people of Israel, he rightly expected obedience from his sons and daughters. But for all his parental care, his children repaid him with provocations and infidelity, so much so that he rejected them and withdrew his Fatherly support (vss. 19-20). According to vs. 5 they forfeited their right to be called sons because of their unacceptable behavior; this unacceptable behavior was nothing less than religious apostasy to foreign gods (vss. 16-17). Vs. 43, on the other hand looks to a time of vindication when the children of Yahweh will be avenged against their foes and will be restored to their proper sonship relation.

The Song of Moses establishes several important themes which recur with regularity, either implicitly or explicitly, in passages where the Father-son motif is found. First, there is the theme of election: God elected and made the people of Israel his sons in the course of their actual history, thereby establishing his Fatherly authority over them. Second, sonship necessitated obedience, particularly in the area of religious practices; failure to remain obedient constituted an abrogation of the right to be treated as a son by God. Closely connected with the two previous themes is the covenant idea; the Father-son relationship is often, as in Dt. 32, cast in the form of a covenant with responsibilities for both parties.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the Father-son image frequently includes real love and compassion on God's

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<sup>1</sup>G. Quell, "πατήρ," TDNT 5, 972.

<sup>2</sup>F.C. Fensham, "Father and Son as Terminology for Treaty and Covenant," Near Eastern Studies in Honor of W.F. Albright (1971), pp. 123-135 has shown convincingly that the terms father and son played an important part in treaties and covenants in the ancient Near East and that many of the Father-son passages in the Old Testament reveal similar characteristics to the usage of father and son language in treaties and covenants. See also McCarthy, "Notes," pp. 144-147.

part; this theme is suggested in vs. 10 where the image of adoption is employed.

A second very ancient text, Ex. 4.22-23 declares Israel's corporative sonship: "Israel is my firstborn son . . . let my son go that he may serve me." This passage in Ex. 4 really presupposes Ex. 11.4-5, the promise of the last great plague in which all the firstborn of the Egyptians were to be destroyed. The Israelites as the *בְּרִיָּה* *בְּרִיָּה* of God are probably not to be thought of as one among many sons, but as God's beloved and dear son. A unique Father-son relationship, initiated by God, exists between God and his people. Vs. 23 gives substance to the nature of this relationship: Israel, as God's son, is to serve him in the wilderness, and ostensibly at all subsequent times. In spite of the key position which Ex. 4.22-23 hold in the narrative of the Exodus, the son motif is not repeated, even though the call, "Let my people go that they may serve me," recurs with regularity. The probable explanation for this is that the words "Israel is my firstborn son" formed a creedal statement with an autonomous existence.<sup>1</sup>

The various occurrences of the Father-son motif in the prophets presuppose the ancient traditions of Dt. 32 and Ex. 4.22-23. Already in these two texts the main lines of the developing Father-son image are discernible. Our purposes do not necessitate the examination of every Father-son allusion in the prophets; rather we may simply look at some of the more representative occurrences.

The first, or at least one of the first of the classical prophets, Hosea, acquired the Father-son motif from the sphere of religious images,<sup>2</sup> and then gave it a powerful application. His most graphic application of this imagery occurs in the extended metaphor of ch. 11 where he provides an exposition of Israel's

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<sup>1</sup>W. Schlisske, Gottessöhne und Gottessohn im Alten Testament: Phasen der Entmythisierung im Alten Testament (1971), p. 161.

<sup>2</sup>H.W. Wolff, Hosea: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Hosea (1974), p. 198 suggests that the wisdom tradition or the tradition of the court and cult provides the source of this imagery. Wolff mentions the wisdom tradition because he sees divine education as one of the themes of the passage. He also says that 11.1-7 has the appearance of a legal complaint made by a father against a stubborn son (p. 194).



election and apostasy, and predicts punishment and restoration all within the framework of the Father-son image. Few passages in the Old Testament match the pathos of Hos. 11.1-11, and few paint God's love for his people in such vivid terms. In Hos. 11.1 Israel is treated as a collective personality with words obviously drawn either directly from Ex. 4.22-23 or from the traditional formulation from which it derived. But a striking difference exists between Hos. 11.1 and Ex. 4.22-23. According to Hosea, God called his son Israel out of Egypt not so he might serve in an uninhibited way but because he loved him with Fatherly love. Hosea's understanding of Israel's corporative sonship and his description of Israel as a וְיָ in vs. 1 enabled him to talk about the nation's historical existence in terms of a child's development under the attentive care of its father. Vss. 1-4 present a strong contrast between God's elective love of Israel which includes fatherly concern and Israel's wayward and intractable behavior. God loved and chose Israel (vs. 1); he taught them to walk and tenderly took them up in his arms as a father does an injured or crying child (vs. 3); he led them with cords of kindness and love, and he became to them as one who lifts a nursing child to his cheek and as one who bends down to feed the child (vs. 4). But Israel persistently rejected God's Fatherly care and compassion, becoming more intractable with every call (vs. 2); they even ignored him when he healed their injuries (vs. 3b). Vss. 5-7 spell out the consequences of Israel's behavior: captivity, destruction, and servitude. But according to vss. 7-9, God's Fatherly nature caused him to recoil; his love and compassion prevented him from allowing Israel to be destroyed totally, though it deserved such a fate. As a loving Father, God wanted his people's punishment to be remedial, not destructive. Finally, in vss. 10-11 Israel's restoration is predicated; the scattered sons of God will once again be called back to their homeland.

Hos. 11.1-11 strongly emphasizes the covenant and elective love of God through the extended application of the Father-son motif. The real significance of Hos. 11.1-11 for the New Testament concept of the Father-son idea relates to the genuine love and compassion it attributes to God as the Father of the nation of Israel. The intensity of pathos, as articulated in this passage and certain other Old Testament texts, may help account for the place of the Fatherhood of God in the teaching and experience of Jesus.

One other passage from Hosea deserves mention in passing because Paul actually quotes it in Rom. 9.25-26. The idea that the people of Israel are God's sons appears in Hos. 1.10 (MT 2.1). The designation of Hosea's son with the name "Not my people" (Hos. 1.8) represents the breaking of the covenant relation by God in judgment upon the nation of Israel. But 1.10 offers hope of restoration for the people: "Where it was said to them 'You are not my people,' it shall be said to them, 'Sons of the living God.'" Even though Israel destroyed the covenant relationship by its disobedience and apostasy, the prophet announces that God shall restore the relation between Israel and himself; the people of Israel shall once again be his sons. Paul, on the other hand, uses this passage to include the Gentiles in the blessing of sonship (cf. Rom. 9.25-26).

The extreme love and compassion ascribed to God's Fatherly nature in Hos. 11 is approximated in Jer. 31. Much of Jer. 31.1-22 originates from the early period of Jeremiah's prophetic career when hope existed for a political and religious reconciliation between the defunct northern kingdom and Judah. In 31.9b God asserts his Fatherhood over Israel when he declares, "I am a Father to Israel and Ephraim is my firstborn (יְהוָה אֵלֵינוּ) cf. Ex. 4.22 and Ps. 89.27). The preceding verses of the chapter, particularly vss. 2-3, express God's great love for his people, and in light of 9b may be thought of as indicating the Fatherly compassion of God. The compassion of the loving Father also pervades vs. 20 where God asks the rhetorical question: "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child?" In strongly anthropomorphic terms, God, as Ephraim's Father, declares, "My heart yearns for him, I will surely have mercy on him." In the words of P. Baur: "Gott nicht bloss väterlich handelt, sondern wirklich auch väterlich fühlt."<sup>1</sup> Vss. 18-19 form a penitential confession and plea for God's re-acceptance by Ephraim; vs. 20, then, is rightly understood as Yahweh's Fatherly response.<sup>2</sup> The theme of God's Fatherly love towards Israel also plays a significant role in Jer. 3, though a certain amount of care is required in discussing

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<sup>1</sup>Baur, "Gott als Vater," p. 491.

<sup>2</sup>Quell, "πατήρ," p. 973, makes the interesting observation that in Jer. 31.18-20 one can perceive the origins of the parable of the prodigal son.



Jer. 3 since some of the Father references refer to God as a husband (cf. 3.1-5; 3.19-20).

The prophet, or prophets, whose work is preserved in Is. 40-66 make use of the Father-son motif to describe the loving compassion of God towards his people, and in Is. 63-64 a significant development evinces itself. Although the loving Father image is found in 43.1-7, the most interesting passage in Is. 40-66 is Is. 63.7-64.12.<sup>1</sup> Direct reference is made to Israel's sonship in 63.8, a verse dominated by the theme of God's love for Israel (vss. 7 and 9). God chose the people of Israel in love, becoming their Savior, with the expectation that his sons would respond with obedient behavior. But, as the historical prophet Isaiah had long before noted, the sons proved faithless and rebellious against their Father (vs. 10; cf. Is. 1.2-4). Having recognized the error of their way, the community begins in vs. 15 to implore God to return to them. The confession of vs. 16 represents one of the most moving verses in the Old Testament because the people cast themselves upon God in total dependence on his Fatherly care:

For thou art our Father,  
 though Abraham does not know us  
 and Israel does not acknowledge us;  
 thou, O Lord, art our Father  
 our Redeemer from of old is thy name.

This verse and Is. 64.8, where God is again spoken of as "our Father," constitute the first appearances of the Father designation for God in a prayer in Jewish literature, and they are the only occurrences in the Old Testament.

The tender and compassionate understanding of God, the loving Father of Israel, put forward in Hosea, Jeremiah, and Deutero-Isaiah contrasts with a judicial conception of the Father-son relation between God and Israel in Is. 1-39 where the term invariably is connected with Israel's sinful and guilt-laden condition.<sup>2</sup> God, Israel's Father, denounces the disobedience and recalcitrance of his sons in accordance with the judicial precepts of Dt. 21.18-21; a sharp note of

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<sup>1</sup>Is. 63.7-64.12 contains a community lament expressed in the form of a psalm according to Westermann, Isaiah 40-66, p. 386.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Von Rad, Theology 2, p. 353.

condemnation punctuates each mention of Israel's sonship (cf. Dt. 32.5-6, 18-20). The opening verses of Isaiah (1.2-4) present a trial called by God, the aggrieved Father, against his obdurate sons, the people of Israel. Instead of the elders of the city, God calls upon heaven and earth to bear witness to the veracity of his charge against his sons. Based on this passage's similarities with broken covenant formulas in Deuteronomy (cf. Dt. 4.26; 30.19, 28; 32.1ff.) and the facts presented against Israel in vss. 2-4, it is evident that the issue at stake is the broken covenant relation between God and his people; Israel has refused to keep covenant faith with God. God reared and brought up the people of Israel as his sons in the course of history, but their only thanks was to rebel against his authority (vs. 2). Unlike dumb animals who at least know their masters, the people of Israel never even perceived God's Fatherly care for them (vs. 3). The rejection of God by the perverse sons led to their total estrangement (vs. 4). In Is. 30.8-14 the people of Israel, as God's sons, are once again condemned for their infidelity (vs. 9-11) and are sentenced for their sins (vss. 12-14). The theme of God's claim against his disobedient sons re-emerges in Jer. 4.22 (cf. Ezek. 21.10) as well.

The breadth of usage of the Father-son motif in the Old Testament has precluded examining every individual text where the motif occurs and its particular contribution to the Father-son image.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the brief examination above sets out the main themes which the various writers of the Old Testament associated with the Father-son idea. Essentially a tension existed between God's Fatherly love and compassion and the disobedience of the sons who time and again rejected him. From the perspective of the New Testament the most important thing is simply that God is regularly thought of as the Father of his people and that he cares for his people with father-like love and compassion. The historical Jesus took up this understanding and, if Paul is anything to go by, made it a theme of central significance for explicating the relation between God and his people.

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<sup>1</sup> No attempt has been made here to discuss those texts relating to the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of the king because they were treated in the background to Christological Sonship.



## B. Post-Old Testament Judaism

Jewish writers in Hellenistic and Roman times, from 200 B.C. onward, took up the Old Testament Father-son motif on occasion and even applied it in several ways which represent developments of tendencies in the Old Testament usage. For the most part, however, the Father-son idea did not achieve a central place in the theological conception of post-Old Testament Judaism, except in Christianity. But Wisdom of Solomon and the Philonic corpus are somewhat exceptional in the frequency with which they employ the Father-son language. Since the author of Wisdom of Solomon, like Philo, may have come from Alexandria, this may reflect, to some extent, the special interests of the Hellenistic Jewish community of Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> Although the differences between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism are not nearly so great or so clear-cut as was formerly thought, it will nevertheless be helpful to distinguish between writings originating in Palestine and in the Diaspora. Rabbinic Jewish writings, while being Palestinian in origin, reflect a somewhat variant tradition from the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings and therefore shall be treated independently.

### 1. Palestinian Jewish Writings (Non-Rabbinic)

#### a. Tobit 13.4-5

One of the oldest extant instances of the Father-son motif in

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<sup>1</sup>Schweizer, "ὁ υἱός," p. 356 maintains: "In general it may be seen that the hesitation to speak of the son of God was not by a long way so strong in Hellenistic Judaism as it was in Palestinian Judaism." The word "hesitation" seems to suggest a conscious avoidance of the idea of divine sonship in Palestinian Judaism, but it seems to us that the paucity of references is merely a matter of chance. The real problem, as in the Old Testament, was that the divine Father and the human son image was only one of many such symbols for the relationship between God and his people. Moreover, if one excludes Wisdom of Solomon, which is unusual in its utilization of the Father-son motif, and Philo, approximately the same number of instances of the divine Father-son terminology are extant in Palestinian writings as in Diaspora works, and it actually occurs in more Palestinian works than Diaspora works. It would be true to say, however, that Diaspora writings did not hesitate to address God as Father whereas in Palestinian works it is confined to one work.

intertestamental literature is found in Tob. 13.4-5.<sup>1</sup> In this passage, which purports to be part of a prayer of rejoicing, Tobit calls upon the sons of Israel to make God's greatness known "because he is our Lord and God, he is our Father for ever" (vs. 4). He goes on to point out that God afflicts the people of Israel for their iniquity and then shows mercy (vs. 5). To the extent that the Father idea is connected with paternal discipline and mercy, the idea is straight out of the Old Testament. The context in which vss. 4-5 occur, however, contains certain eschatological overtones such as the reference to the gathering of the dispersed people of God (13.5), the reference to the coming of the nations to worship God (13.11), and the description of a "new" Jerusalem exalted forever (13.16-18). The connection of the Father-son motif with eschatological expectations represents one of the major developments in the use of the Father-son motif, though in Tobit the idea only appears in a nascent form.

b. Jubilees 1.22ff.

The use of the Father-son conception in a clear-cut eschatological way first appears in the Book of Jubilees, a work probably dating from the second half of the second century B.C.<sup>2</sup> In the first chapter of the work, Moses prays to God that he will not forsake his people, and that he will deliver them from their sins, and from the hands of the Gentiles who would cause them to sin. The Lord responds to this prayer of Moses by acknowledging the recalcitrance and disobedience of the people of Israel, but he also promises a future day when they shall turn to him in uprightness forevermore (1.22-23). When this happens, the whole character of the people of Israel will be changed for the Lord says:

They will fulfil my commandments and I will be their Father and they shall be My children.<sup>3</sup> And they shall be called

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<sup>1</sup>On the date see Eissfeldt, Introduction, pp. 584-585.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. D.S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (1964), p. 54, and Eissfeldt, Introduction, p. 608. Eissfeldt suggests the work originated at Qumran since fragments of nine Hebrew manuscripts have been found there, and some of the thought patterns, such as separation from all uncleanness, and the solar calendar are identical (pp. 607-608).

<sup>3</sup>O. Michel and O. Betz, "Von Gott gezeugt," p. 14, suggest that the adoption formula of 2 Sam. 7.14 is given a collective



children of the living God, and every angel and every spirit shall know, yea, they shall know that these are My children, and that I am their Father in uprightness and righteousness, and that I love them (1.24-25).

Thus the Book of Jubilees establishes a close connection between divine sonship and obedience to the commandments of God; God's Fatherhood of the nation will only be recognized when the Israelites turn to God with righteous behavior. The whole context of the passage is eschatological as is shown by the emphasis on the eternal quality of the new relationship that is to exist between God and his people (vs. 23), by the promise of God to descend and dwell with his children for eternity (vs. 26), and by the prospect of a renewed creation (vs. 29). The sonship thus takes on an eschatological character which presupposes a new order of existence for Israel in which the sonship of the people of Israel will be made apparent. In spite of the connection between righteous behavior and sonship in Jubilees, the author understands sonship as being corporative since in 1.28 he asserts that God is "the Father of all the children of Jacob." But this is a warm and tender relationship based on God's love for his people (1.25b). According to 2.20 and 19.29 Israel's corporative sonship is derived from the special sonship of Jacob whom God declared to be his firstborn (cf. Ex. 4.22). In other words, sonship is ultimately a matter of election for the author of Jubilees, and in this he is merely following the Old Testament.

The eschatological conception of sonship found in Jub. 1.24ff. has obvious similarities with Rom. 8.18ff. where Paul emphasizes the eschatological character of his own sonship conception. It is also interesting that in both Jub. 1.29 and Rom. 8.19-22 that the renewal of the whole creation is connected with the eschatological manifestation of the sons of God. Very clearly Paul operates within a Jewish framework in Rom. 8.18ff., though he differs from Jubilees in that sonship is not portrayed in corporative terms.

#### c. Wisdom of ben Sirach (Hebrew)

If the "eschatologizing" of the Father-son motif in Jub. 1 constitutes one of the significant developments in its use, then

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interpretation here in Jub. 1.24. Cf. E. Lohse, "ὁἰός," p. 359. This is of special interest because the same thing happens in 2 Cor. 6.18.

another presents itself in Wisdom of ben Sirach. This work provides the first known instance where the idea of divine sonship is attributed to an individual as a result of his righteous or godly behavior. The work dates from roughly 175 B.C. and was written in Jerusalem by an orthodox Jew concerned about the rising influence of Hellenistic liberalism among his coreligionists.<sup>1</sup> The work was originally written in Hebrew and then translated into Greek at Alexandria by the author's grandson, according to the prologue of the work.<sup>2</sup> Since differences exist between the proto-Hebrew text and the Greek translation of Sirach in passages relating to the Father-son motif, we must give attention to Sirach here and in our discussion of Diaspora literature.<sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of ch. 4 Jesus ben Sirach offers instruction on the proper attitude and behavior of the wise man towards the poor, the oppressed, and the displaced members of society. He concludes his admonition by saying:

Incline thine ear to the afflicted  
And return his salutation in meekness.  
Deliver the oppressed from his oppressors.  
And let not thy spirit hate just judgment.  
Be as a father to orphans,  
And in place of a husband to widows;  
Then God will call thee 'son',  
And will be gracious to thee  
And deliver thee from the Pit (Sir. 4.8-10).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For an excellent discussion of the work of Jesus ben Sirach and particularly his confrontation with Hellenistic liberalism see M. Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism 1 (1974), pp. 131-153.

<sup>2</sup>The Hebrew text of Sirach was lost until 1896 when fragments of a Hebrew version of Sirach were found at the Geniza<sup>of the old</sup> synagogue in Cairo. This sparked off a controversy over whether these fragments were derived from a Hebrew original or were merely translations of the Greek or Syriac translation of the Hebrew original. A. Di Lella, The Hebrew Text of Sirach: A Text-Critical and Historical Study (1966) has argued with cogency that the text recovered from the Geniza Synagogue represents a proto-Hebrew text which is independent of the Greek and Syriac translations. His conclusions rest on a detailed study of the various textual traditions and a careful assessment of recent archaeological finds at Qumran.

<sup>3</sup>The LXX of 23.1, 4 has the father-son idea, but it is highly improbable that the original Hebrew did.

<sup>4</sup>This translation is taken from Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha 1, and is based on the Hebrew text. The Hebrew of Sirach can be found in F. Vattioni, Ecclesiastico: Testo ebraico con apparato critico e versioni greca, latina e siriana (1968).



In an appendix to the book the writer recounts God's deliverance when he sought it in his desperation. He says: "Yea I cried: 'O Jahveh, my Father art Thou, / For Thou art the hero of my salvation' (Sir. 51.10).<sup>1</sup> Together these two passages from Sirach provide evidence for a decisive change in the Father-son idea in Judaism. For the first time an individual Israelite, apart from the king, is called a "son of God" and is able to pronounce God as his Father for a reason other than his membership in the nation of Israel. It is not surprising that this change should emerge first within the wisdom genre of literature with its interest in the individual learner and his behavior. Sir. 4.1-10 reveals that the individualized concept of divine sonship is founded upon the righteous behavior of the individual which shows him to be godlike and therefore worthy of being closely identified with God. The fact that God pronounces the righteous man "son" and responds to his needs with Fatherly concern (4.10) results from the personal relationship which was thought to exist between the two. Thus in Sir. 51.10 the righteous individual is able to call upon God as his Father in the hour of his need.

With specific reference to Sirach, Walter Grundmann maintains that the individualization of sonship in Jewish thought resulted from the influence of Hellenism:

Der eigentliche hellenistische Einfluss aber zeigt sich nach dem Häufigerwerden des Symbol vor allem in seiner Individualisierung; die den atlichen Rahmen sprengt . . . Unter dem Einfluss des Hellenismus ist Frömmigkeit und Gerechtigkeit zur Voraussetzung individueller Gotteskindschaft geworden.<sup>2</sup>

But this view is at best an oversimplification. A model for individualized sonship was available to Ben Sirach from the Old Testament.

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<sup>1</sup>This translation is also taken from Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha 1, and is based on the Hebrew text. The Hebrew of vs. 10 is apparently based on Ps. 89.27 (MT). Cf. Marchel, Abba, p. 70, who says, "La frappante ressemblance entre le texte hébreu et le Ps. 89, 27, semble indiquer que Sir 51,14 [Hebrew] est une citation libre de ce psaume." The LXX of 51.10a reads: ἐπεκαλεσάμην κύριον πατέρα κυρίου μου/ὡς με ἐγκαταλίπειν ἐν ἡμέραις θλίψεως, and seems to be a Christian alteration based on Ps. 110.1. Cf. Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha 1, p. 513, n. 10 and Marchel, Abba, p. 70, n. 16.

<sup>2</sup>W. Grundmann, Die Gotteskindschaft in der Geschichte Jesu und ihre religionsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen (1938), p. 36. Grundmann believes that it was only under the influence of Hellenism that references to divine sonship became frequent in the Old Testament. He cites Is. 63.8, 16; 64.7; and Mal. 1.6; 2.10 as falling in this class (pp. 33-34). However, as we have seen, the divine sonship idea is well dispersed in the Old Testament, and today few would see any Hellenistic influence in Is. 63 and 64, and Mal. 1 and 2.

He need only have looked at Ps. 2.7 and Ps. 89.27 to find a basis for calling an individual a son of God. The similarity between Sir. 51.10 and Ps. 89.27 suggests that this is exactly what he did. In a period in which increasing emphasis was being put on the religious faithfulness of the individual, it was only natural to assume that the Old Testament referred to individuals as sons of God when it spoke of God's sons in a collective way. Thus in Sirach the righteous man is God's son by virtue of his behavior, not by reason of his birth or through a change in his nature.

#### d. Psalms of Solomon

In the first century B.C. collection of psalms known as the Psalms of Solomon both the individualized conception of sonship and the eschatological application of the Father-son terminology are found. Ps. Sol. 13 portrays the righteous individual being treated as a son of God who receives personal correction and chastisement from his divine Father.

For He [God] correcteth the righteous as a beloved son,  
And his chastisement is as that of a first-born (Ps. Sol.  
13.8 Gr. vs. 9).

While the extant Greek text speaks of the Father-son relationship between God and the righteous man in somewhat metaphorical terms, the original Hebrew may not have contained a simile, but instead it may have spoken directly of the sonship of the righteous.<sup>1</sup> Ps. 17.30 (Gr. 17.27) explicitly calls the righteous "sons of their God." Ps. Sol. 17 looks forward to the coming of the descendant of David who will establish the Messianic kingdom and rule in righteousness over the nation of Israel. Thus, the psalm concerns what may be designated Messianic eschatology. The recognition of the sons of God will come about under the Messiah's rule. The Father-son idea also appears in Ps. Sol. 18, another Messianic eschatological psalm:

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. P. Winter, "Monogenēs para Patros," Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte 5 (1953), p. 346, n. 30 who makes the same point with respect to Ps. Sol. 18.4 by pointing out that the Greek text of Sir. 4.10 adds ὧς where the original Hebrew does not have ׀.



Thy love (is) towards the seed of Abraham, the children of Israel.

Thy chastisement is upon us as (upon) a first-born, only begotten son.

To turn back the obedient soul from folly that is wrought in ignorance (vss. 4-5a).

God will deal with the nation of Israel as a wayward son, but also as an especially loved son when the Messianic kingdom comes. The seed of Abraham as the sons of God has particular significance in terms of Paul because this idea has parallels in Rom. 9.6ff. and Gal. 3. Rom. 9.8, in particular, suggests that Paul assumed the existence of a connection between Abrahamic descent and being a child of God. When this assumption is applied to the argument in Gal. 3 it perhaps suggests part of the reason why in 3.26-29 Paul could move from the Galatians' divine sonship to their being seed of Abraham: Divine sonship and Abrahamic descent go hand in hand; therefore, since the Galatians were sons of God, they were also the seed of Abraham. As we shall see, the thought of Gal. 3.26-29 is somewhat more complicated than this, but the relation between divine sonship and Abrahamic descent is certainly in the background of the passage.

A few other references to the Father-son motif have been preserved in the non-Rabbinic Jewish literature originating in Palestine, but they add little to the conceptions already discovered (cf. 1 En. 62.10-12a; Assumption of Moses 10.3; 4 Ezra 6.58; 2 Baruch 13.9-10; 1QH9.34-36<sup>1</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup>That the writings of Qumran have yielded only this solitary reference, apart from texts where the Old Testament is quoted, is somewhat surprising. J. Carmignac, Recherches sur le "Notre Père" (1969), p. 58 claims of the Father reference in 1QH9.34-36, "Mais alors ce n'est pas une simple mention fugitive, c'est un véritable développement, qui insiste en particulier sur la tendresse et la sollicitude de notre véritable Père nourricier." This, however, overstates the case, not only because the same sort of tender language found in 1QH9.34-36 appears in the Old Testament (cf. Jer. 31.20; Hos. 11.1ff.), but also because the emphasis of the verses is on God's gracious care which is described as fatherly care, motherly care, and foster-fatherly care in rapid succession.

## 2. Hellenistic Judaism

The extant Hellenistic Jewish writings, most of which originated in Alexandria, betray no hesitancy in employing the divine Father-son terminology in a variety of ways. On close observation, the theological use of the Father-son idea in Hellenistic Judaism reveals that it was under the divergent influence of both the Jewish and Hellenistic traditions of religious and philosophical thought. On the one hand, when personal and ethical aspects of the divine Father-son relationship are emphasized, or when the idea is placed in an eschatological setting, the influence of the Old Testament and contemporary Jewish thinking are readily discernible. On the other hand, when God's Fatherhood is depicted as being cosmological and genealogical, when universalism is stressed, and when the Father-son idea becomes a philosophical category, the influence of Hellenistic thought is present.

### a. Wisdom of ben Sirach (Greek)

The Book of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus, which was previously discussed under the heading of Palestinian Judaism, must also be given special mention with respect to Hellenistic Judaism. The reason for this is that the Greek text of 23.1, 4, where God is addressed as Father, probably constitutes a modification of the original Hebrew text.

The Book of Sirach was translated into Greek at Alexandria by the author's grandson according to the prologue of the work, and this most likely occurred in the period 132-116 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Because of its relatively early date of translation, it provides a bridge between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism with respect to the use of the Father-son motif. The translation and dissemination of Sir. 4.1-10 into Greek is clear evidence for the fact that very early Hellenistic Judaism knew the idea that the righteous individual enjoyed a special relationship with God as a son (καὶ ἔσῃ ὡς υἱὸς ὑψίστου, Sir. 4.10; cf. Lk. 6.35). On the basis of Sir. 36.12,

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<sup>1</sup> Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha 1, p. 293.



the idea of corporative sonship along the lines of the Old Testament was also known. But in the case of Sir. 51.10, it is not possible to know how the initial Greek translation read since the existing texts probably reflect Christian editorial work. In Sir. 23.1, 4 a new feature was introduced. There is no extant early Hebrew text for this passage, but it seems highly improbable that the original Hebrew would have addressed God as Father by using the triple vocative found in the Greek text: κύριε πάτερ καὶ δέσποτα ζωῆς μου (23.1) and κύριε πάτερ καὶ θεὸς ζωῆς μου (23.4).<sup>1</sup> The translator probably mistranslated the common Hebrew expression 'יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי, "God of my father," (cf. Ex. 15.2) as "Lord, Father."<sup>2</sup> In this he may have been influenced by the Hebrew of Sir. 51.10 where Yahweh is described as 'יְיָ. At any rate, the Greek text of Sir. 23.1, 4 is the first known instance of God being addressed as Father in a personal prayer in Jewish literature; as such, it represents a logical development in Jewish thought concerning God as Father, and therefore need not be attributed to Hellenistic borrowing.

#### b. 3 Maccabees

The first century B.C. Alexandrian Jewish work of 3 Macc., which is a legendary story, alludes to the paternal-filial image on several occasions. God's fatherhood is mentioned in four passages, and two of these occur in prayer contexts (3 Macc. 5.7-8 and 6.2-15). In the more interesting of the two prayers, a certain devout and righteous old priest named Eleazer prays to God, addressing him as "King of great power, most high, almighty God who governest all creation with loving-kindness, . . . O Father (πάτερ) . . . O Father (πάτερ) . . ." (6.2-15). The obvious intention of the prayer address to God as Father was to elicit his Fatherly sympathies for his children in a time of great need. Although it is true that the Greeks addressed Zeus as "Father of all," the personal relationship implied in the prayers of 3 Macc. clearly distinguishes the

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 28-29, and cf. Marchel, Abba, pp. 66-67. However, see Dalman, Words of Jesus, pp. 184-185, for a different view.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 28-29.

Jewish address to their God as Father from that of popular Greek religion.<sup>1</sup> Further, the description of Eleazer's pious character in 6.1 has the effect of demonstrating his worth and right to address God as Father on behalf of the whole people; this may indicate that there is a connection here between the righteousness of the individual and the address to God as Father.

One other significant reference to the Father-son idea occurring in 3 Macc. requires attention. In the fictitious letter of King Ptolemy Philopator, he acknowledges God's protection of the Jews against their enemies: "The God of heaven surely protects the Jews, fighting on their side continually as a father for his children (ὡς πατέρα ὑπὲρ υἱῶν) . . . " (3 Macc. 7.6). The writer of the work is obviously stating his own view which is that the relation of God to his people is admirably depicted by the Father-son image. In keeping with traditional Jewish thought, the passage implies the existence of a personal relation between God and the Jewish people which causes God to intervene on behalf of his people.

#### c. Wisdom of Solomon

No writer in the intertestamental period employs the Father-son motif more frequently than the author of Wisdom of Solomon. In the second part of the work, ch. 11-19, the sonship idea becomes one of the two means used for depicting God's relationship with his people. In ch. 11, 12, 16, 18, and 19 God's Fatherhood and the sonship of the Israelites stands in contrast to the hostile relation existing between God and other peoples. The Egyptians of the time of the Exodus are made a type of the opponents of God's sons throughout history. The series of references to the Father-son motif in Wis. 11-19 (see 11.10; 12.19-21; 16.19, 21, 25-26; 18.4, 13; 19.6) constitutes the most extensive and consistent application of

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, p. 27 says, "It is certain that God was addressed as πατήρ in Diaspora Judaism, which followed the example of the Greek world here." He specifically cites 3 Macc. 6.3, 8 as examples of this. However, Marchel, Abba, pp. 61-84, argues cogently that the address of God as Father in Hellenistic Judaism represented a legitimate internal development of Judaism which was prepared for in the Old Testament by Is. 63-64. Greek usage may have provided a certain impetus, but on the whole, the contexts where God is addressed as Father in Hellenistic Jewish writings owe their genius to Judaism.



the idea in ancient Judaism. The emphasis of these references rests on the personal and ethical quality of the relationship between God and his people, and special attention is focused on the profound caring love of the Father for his sons. Similar in character to the occurrences of the Father-son image in ch. 11-19 are the two found in chapter 9 (9.4 and 7). The usage of the Father-son image in Wis. 2 and 5, however, merits closer examination.

According to 2.12-18, righteousness is a requisite for sonship to God, but it is sonship for the righteous man as an individual along the lines of Sir. 4.10, and thus it is not simply because he is a Jew.<sup>1</sup> The section beginning in 2.12 and ending at 5.23 is an extended discourse on the behavior and fate of the godly righteous man vis-à-vis ungodly sinners; ultimately, the righteous man's hope is seen to be in God.<sup>2</sup> The descriptions of the suffering righteous man in ch. 2-5 are almost certainly drawn from the image

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, "παῖς," p. 684 maintains the παῖς κυρίου (child of God) in Wis. 2 and 5 is a type of the righteous and that this is based on a collective interpretation of Is. 53. However, for the author of Wis., an individual possesses sonship on the basis of the quality of his own life; the individual is not a son of God because he is a member of a group of the righteous, but because his own behavior is righteous, and by it he proves himself to be a child of God in his own right. Cf. Dalman, Words of Jesus, p. 185. Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 82, n. 15 rightly rejects Jeremias' view that pseudo-Solomon intended a corporative interpretation of the παῖς κυρίου: "the examples from Wisdom are hardly collective; they are rather references to the individual righteous man." See also his discussions on pp. 66, and 70-71. The view of Bousset, Kyrios Christos, pp. 87-88, 94 that a new element from the Hellenistic mystery religions has entered Judaism in Wis. 2.13ff. is completely groundless. As Fuller, Foundations of Christology, p. 71 points out, the characteristics which Bousset claims are Hellenistic borrowings are precisely the features relating to the righteous man in the Old Testament.

<sup>2</sup>On the eschatological character of Wis. 1.1-6.11 and 6.17-20 see J. Reese, Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences (1970), pp. 109-114. Reese's discussion is unfortunately marred by a tendency to equate eschatology with apocalyptic. However, his final assessment of the first six chapters of Wis. is essentially correct: "its aim is primarily apologetic in the sense that it seeks to offer an insight into man's true destiny; it is an appeal to him to strive for it in spite of difficulties and opposing theories of life." In other words, this section of Wis. is concerned with personal eschatology.

of the suffering servant of Yahweh in Dt. Is. 40-55, especially 52.13-53.12.<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the somewhat ambiguous use of  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  and  $\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  in Is. 40-55, coupled with the fact that  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  meant son as well, led the author of Wisdom to understand that the  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  of Dt. Is. was synonymous with  $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  (cf. Wis. 2.13 with 2.16, 18).<sup>2</sup> His interpretation of Dt. Is. encouraged the author of Wisdom to expound the idea that the righteous man is the son of God who knows that God is his Father.

Although the words of Wis. 2.12-20 are put into the mouths of the ungodly, they accurately represent the author's own view of the godly righteous man as is shown by the vindication of the godly man's claims in 5.1ff. One of the charges of the ungodly against the righteous man is that "he professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child ( $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$ ) of the Lord" (2.13). For the writer of Wisdom, it is the fact that a man has knowledge of God and has been righteous in his behavior which enables him to call himself a child of God. It follows from this that the righteous man is able to call God his Father, though the claim of a personal relationship with God appears as an idle boast to the unrighteous (2.16). With cold calculations, the unrighteous determine that they will test the pretensions of the righteous:

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<sup>1</sup>The parallels in thought, but not in vocabulary, to Is. 52.13-53.12 are most obvious in ch. 5, but similarities are also discernible in 2.12-20 and 3.1-9. Jeremias, " $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$ ," p. 684 suggests the following parallels: Wis. 2.13 par. Is. 52.13 and 53.11; Wis. 2.19f. par. Is. 53.7f.; Wis. 4.18 par. Is. 53.3; Wis. 4.20 and 5.3f. par. Is. 53.2-4; Wis. 5.5 par. Is. 53.12; Wis. 5.6f. par. Is. 53.6; Wis. 5.15f. par. Is. 53.10-12. To Jeremias' list might be added Wis. 3.2-3 par. Is. 53.3-4; Wis. 3.5 par. Is. 53.11; and Wis. 3.5ff. par. Is. 52.15 and 53.10-12. However, it must be added that one feature of Is. 53 is conspicuous by its absence, namely vicarious atonement. For the author of Wis., the suffering of the righteous individual neither atones for others nor for himself; his suffering merely proves him worthy of God (3.5f.). Cf. Suggs, "Wisdom of Solomon," pp. 29ff. who suggests that Wis. 2.10-5.1ff. forms a homily based on the Fourth Servant Song. He says, "The homily is not a mere paraphrase of Isaianic materials, for the verbal similarities to the older book are too slight for this to be the case. It is rather, a sermon which always has Isaiah's  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  in view . . ." (p. 33).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 279 and Suggs, "Wis. of Sol.," p. 29. Jeremias, " $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$ ," p. 683 says, "The greater the distance from the original Heb. text the more strongly the second view [that  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$  meant 'child of God'] prevailed in the Hellenistic Jewish understanding of Is. 40ff."



Let us see if his words are true,  
 and let us test what will happen at the end of his life;  
 for if the righteous man is God's son, he will help him,  
 and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries.  
 Let us test him with insult and torture,  
 that we may find out how gentle he is,  
 and make trial of his forbearance.  
 Let us condemn him to a shameful death.  
 for, according to what he says, he will be protected  
 (2.18-20).

For the writer of Wisdom, sonship is not merely a titular claim of the righteous man; it is a bond which guarantees God's help and care for him, particularly in times of tribulation (cf. 3.1-9).

The nature of human existence in a world where evil exists along with good means that the vindication of the righteous man against his adversaries must await the judgment, though it is not clear from Wisdom whether this is at the end of the age or at the death of the individual. Nevertheless, the vindication of the righteous will come as a fearful and astounding turn of events for his godless persecutors (4.20-5.8). The final confirmation of the ways of the righteous man consists in his being numbered with the other sons of God in the presence of his accusers (5.5).

Thus pseudo-Solomon presents a very developed conception of the paternal-filial relation between God and the righteous individual, making it a firm basis for the eschatological hope of the righteous man. But the sonship which belongs to the righteous individual in Wis. 2-5, is also characteristic of the race of righteous men in ch. 11-19. The Israelites of the Exodus are thus a type of all righteous men to whom the designation "sons of God" belongs.

#### d. Sibylline Oracles

The Hellenistic Jewish religious propaganda tract, the Sibylline Oracles, once speaks of the Jewish God as "the Immortal Father of gods and men" (Book III, 278), a title which it obviously borrows from Zeus.<sup>1</sup> This same cosmological-genealogical sense comes through later in the work when the Sibyl says, "I besought the Great Father

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<sup>1</sup> See Eissfeldt, Introduction, p. 616 on the origin of the Sibylline literature, especially Book III which underwent several redactions. See P. Dalbert, Die Theologie der hellenistischen-jüdischen Missions-Literatur unter Ausschluss von Philo und Josephus (1954), pp. 106-123 on the religious propaganda intention of the Sibylline Oracles.

to ease me from my spell" (Book III, 296), and again when the Greeks are called to "reverence the name of the Father of all and forget him not" by laying aside their false religious practices (Book III, 550). The emphasis in these passages on the universal Fatherhood of God is probably attributable to the author's concern to offer a religious appeal to non-Jews. However, the author returns to a much more traditional Jewish usage of the divine Father-son motif near the end of the work where divine sonship is made the exclusive possession of the Jewish people: "Then again all the sons of the great God shall live quietly around the temple rejoicing in those gifts which He shall give, who is the Creator, and sovereign righteous Judge" (Book III, 702-704). This is an eschatological happening according to the context. A few lines later the depth of the Father-son bond between God and his people is brought out: "How doth the Eternal love those men! For all things work in sympathy with them and help them . . ." (Book III, 711-712; cf. Wis. 16.25b-26 and 19.6). The Jewish people respond to God's goodness towards them in the eschatological time by saying, "Come, let us throughout God's people fall upon our faces, and gladden with hymns God our Father throughout our households. . ." (Book III, 725-726). Thus the Jewish writer of this work is willing to employ Greek ideas concerning the Fatherhood of God, but at heart, he remains essentially Jewish in his understanding of the divine Father-son relationship.<sup>1</sup>

#### e. Philo

The complex interrelationship of Hellenistic and Jewish thought in Philo Judaeus makes his work a distinct element within the broader context of Hellenistic Judaism. The complexity of his thought extends quite clearly to his designation of God as Father and a plethora of things as God's children. Repeatedly, the works of Philo refer to God in such patently Greek terms as "Father of the universe," "Father and Creator of the universe," "Father and Ruler of all things," "Father and Creator of all men and all things," and

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<sup>1</sup>In Book V, which stems from well into the second century A.D., the father image is universalized on the six occasions in which it occurs (284-285; 328; 360; 406; 497-500 twice).



"Father of the stars."<sup>1</sup> These and similar ascriptions found in Philo are not in anyway characteristic of the Jewish understanding of God's Fatherhood because they place the emphasis on cosmological and genealogical Fatherhood.<sup>2</sup> However, at the same time, Philo inserts aspects of the Jewish understanding of the personal divine paternal-filial relation into passages where God is designated as universal Father in a Greek sense. This tension in Philonic thought has been described most admirably by E.R. Goodenough:

Far as Philo went in accepting the abstract Pure Being of the Greek philosophical deity, he never lost the personal and merciful God of the Jews. The two are logically strange company, but appear in constant juxtaposition.<sup>3</sup>

In conformity with Greek concepts of God's Fatherhood, Philo often elaborates the cosmological-genealogical role of God as Father. In Quaest. Gen., III, 49, Philo makes clear that God is the true genealogical source of all life:

Very naturally does (Scripture) instruct those who think that they are the causes of generation, and do not intently fix their minds on seeing the begetter of all things, for He is the veritable and true Father. But we who are called begetters are used as instruments in the service of generation . . ."

The cosmological Fatherhood of God is undoubtedly intended when reference is made, as in the previous quotation, to God as the "begetter of all things;" thus we find in another place, by implication, that everything created, whether human, subhuman, or inanimate, has God for a Father:

Let us then reject all such imposture and refrain from worshipping those who by nature are our brothers, even though they have been given a substance purer and more immortal than ours, for created things, in so far as they

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<sup>1</sup>For a convenient index and citation of every reference to the idea of the divine Father and the divine son in Philo see Carmen, "Philo's Divine Father," pp. 493-518.

<sup>2</sup>See Schrenk, "πατήρ," pp. 978-979 on cosmological and genealogical Fatherhood.

<sup>3</sup>E.R. Goodenough, An Introduction to Philo (1962<sup>2</sup>), p. 85. However, Goodenough is guilty of a false assumption when he says in the same context, "The abiding appeal of Judaism . . . was its doctrine of God the Father who is not only the Father creator, as with the Greeks, but the loving protector of his children." God is only called the Father creator in Jewish literature when it is under Greek influence. The cosmological Fatherhood of God is, most clearly, not a traditional Jewish idea.

are created, are brothers, since they have all one Father, the Maker of the universe (Decal., 64).

Not only is God the cosmological-genealogical Father of the universe, but the knowledge possessed by God, divine wisdom, is the mother of the universe (Ebriet., 30-31). The visible universe is the younger son of God ( $\nu\epsilon\acute{\omega}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma\ \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ ), according to Philo, and the intelligible universe is assigned the position of elder ( $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\nu$ ) and firstborn ( $\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ ) son of God (Deus Immut., 31-32). This means little more than the world of ideas and intellect precedes in time and priority the physical universe; but it does demonstrate the extent to which Fatherhood and sonship have become philosophical categories in Philo for explaining ontology.<sup>1</sup>

As we have seen in another connection, Philo grants the divine Logos the status of Son. God is his Father and Wisdom his mother:<sup>2</sup> "He [the divine Logos] is the child of parents incorruptible and wholly free from stain, his Father being God, who is likewise Father of all, and his mother Wisdom, through whom the universe came into existence" (Fuga, 109).

For Philo, the Fatherhood of God extends to and includes his Fatherhood of men, not merely in the genealogical sense, but in a metaphysical and ethical sense.<sup>3</sup> Some men are sons of God by virtue of their nature, while others are unworthy of such an exalted designation. According to Philo, Moses properly differentiated between those worthy of the status of divine sonship and those who

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<sup>1</sup> Philo's ontology is essentially derived from Plato's Timaeus, but Jewish Wisdom speculation is also introduced into it. See Hengel, Son of God, pp. 51-53. Also see H.A. Wolfson, Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam 1 (1948), pp. 295-324.

<sup>2</sup> On the difference between the Logos and intelligible universe both of which are called God's elder sons, see Wolfson, Philo, pp. 226-240. Hengel, Son of God, p. 52 fails to distinguish between the two.

<sup>3</sup> Hengel, Son of God, p. 53 is right to point out that Philo exercises restraint in applying the category of sonship to men. The metaphysical and ethical aspects of human sonship are essentially derived from Stoicism. Thus É. Bréhier, Les Idées Philosophiques et Religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie (1950<sup>3</sup>), p. 234, says of Philo's human divine sonship: "Le fils de Dieu . . . n'est donc que le sage au sens stoïcien . . ." Hengel, Son of God, pp. 53-54, 56, is in agreement with this view.



were unfit: "Moses give[s] to good and excellent men the name of 'son of God,' while wicked and evil men (he calls) 'bodies'" (Quaes. Gen., I, 92). The context makes it clear that men are called "sons of God" when they conform to the higher spiritual order of existence. Wisdom is a requisite for metaphysical sonship. Thus Philo says, "But he who has this portion [wisdom] has passed beyond the bounds of human happiness. He alone is nobly born, for he has registered God as his Father and become by adoption His only son (γεγονῶς εἰσποιητὸς αὐτῷ μόνος υἱός) . . ." (Sobr., 56). This text is of particular interest in connection with Paul because it is the only instance known to us from the New Testament period of the adoption metaphor being used in a religious sense outside of Paul.

In the understanding of Philo the metaphysical sonship evinced by Sobr., 56 is something to be attained by man: "For if we have not yet become fit to be thought sons of God yet we may be sons of his invisible image, the most holy Word" (Conf. Ling., 147). The way divine sonship is acquired is through moral effort, as in Stoicism: "Indeed with those whose soul is thus disposed it follows that they hold moral beauty to be the only good, and this serves as a counterwork engineered by veteran warriors to fight the course which makes Pleasure the end and to subvert and overthrow it" (Conf. Ling., 145).

In spite of the fact that human divine sonship almost always takes on Greek philosophical overtones in Philo, it also has on occasion a personal dimension which is indubitably attributable to Philo's Jewish heritage. The relationship between God, the divine Father, and his sons is a reciprocal one in which there is inter-communication between the Father and his sons. The angels "convey the biddings of the Father to His children (ἐγγόνοις) and report the children's need to their Father" (Somn., I, 141). The sons are obedient to their Father and seek to imitate his very nature (Sacr. Abel., 68), and God has Fatherly mercy on them for their moral strivings (Sacr. Abel., 42).

The personal aspects of the divine Father-son relation are found in one context that may actually be described as eschatological, (though one wonders if Philo has not given us an allegory of his own). Philo foresees a day when the Jews of the Diaspora will return to

their homeland, at which time they will be reconciled to their divine Father. Three intercessors plead for this reconciliation: the first is the "clemency and kindness" of God their Father "who prefers clemency to punishment"; the second is the "holiness of the founders of the race" who supplicate the divine Father on behalf of their sons and daughter; and the third is "the reformation working in those being brought to make a covenant of peace . . . with God, as sons may with their Father" (Praem. et Poen., 165ff.).

The diverse and often contradictory ways in which Philo employed the Father-son image in his works argue strongly that it was not a fixed category for him. Instead it was a very elastic metaphor which could be used in a cosmological and genealogical sense, or for metaphysical and ethical purposes. While often the metaphor was governed by Platonic and Stoic conceptions, nevertheless, on occasion, Jewish elements did leave an impression on its usage. In some respects, Philo's use of the divine Father-son image forms a microcosm of the influences and ambiguities of the Jewish and Hellenistic elements of his philosophy.

### 3. Rabbinic Judaism

Rabbinic Judaism frequently employed the Father-son terminology in discussions concerning the relationship between God and Israel,<sup>1</sup> and addressed God as Father in certain liturgical prayers.<sup>2</sup> The Rab-

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, p. 16 suggests that it was only in the second half of the first century A.D. that the use of the designation "Father" for God became well-established. Cf. Strack-Billerbeck I, p. 393. The Targums on the prophets show a consistent reluctance to speak of God as Father in a narrow sense according to Dalman, Words of Jesus, p. 191 and Marchel, Abba, 111-112. The expression "Father in heaven" does occur thirteen times in the Palestinian targums Pseudo-Jonathan, Fragment Targum, and Neofiti on the Pentateuch. But the fact that the three only agree in one passage makes it difficult to draw conclusions, except to say that the Palestinian tradition did allow for the reading in of the divine Fatherhood idea into a passage in order to interpret it. See M. McNamara, Targum and Testament. Aramaic Paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible: A Light on the New Testament (1972), pp. 116ff.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 24-25, asserts, "From the first two centuries A.D. we can mention with certainty only two prayers from Palestine which address God as Father. The oldest example is likely to be the prayer  $\text{שְׁמָא שְׁמָא}$  (the second of the two benedictions which introduced the morning Shema') . . ." The second benediction begins "Our Father, Our King." The other prayer from this period



binic usage is in fundamental harmony with that of the Old Testament and the developments of Palestinian intertestamental Judaism, with the noticeable exception that the Father-son motif is almost never employed in anything like an eschatological context.<sup>1</sup> The range of application in Rabbinic literature indicates that no one pattern existed for the employment of the paternal-filial bond. Sometimes corporative sonship is presented, while at other times individualized sonship is suggested. On occasions the motif is placed in contexts setting out special requirements for sonship, while in other instances the Israelites are presented as remaining God's sons even when they sin.<sup>2</sup> The citation of a few passages is sufficient to establish the general tendencies in Rabbinic literature with respect to the application and significance of the Father-son designation.

In conformity with the dominant Old Testament usage, sonship is most often predicated of Israel in a corporative sense in Rabbinic writings. Thus Rabbi Johanan said in the name of Rabbi Eliezer the Galilean, that when Israel stood at Mt. Sinai and promised to obey and do all God had commanded, God told the angel of death: "Even though I made you a universal ruler over earthly creatures, you

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making use of the word "Father" in addressing God is the Litany for the New Year in which each verse commences with the address, "Our Father, Our King." At a later date God is frequently addressed as Father in prayers; it is from a later period that the simple address "Our Father" entered into Eighteen Benedictions (Jeremias, Prayers, p. 26). However, as Jeremias points out, the existence of the phrase "Our Father who art in Heaven" in the Lord's Prayer indicates that God was perhaps more commonly addressed as Father in Palestinian Judaism than is now obvious from the sources. Cf. Marchel, Abba, p. 87ff., who is in essential agreement with Jeremias.

<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, p. 21 maintains, "There seems to be no eschatological connotations at all to 'Father' as a divine title in Rabbinic literature." However, in Sotah, 9.15, there is a reference to God as "our Father in heaven" in a passage that is close to eschatological since it speaks of the signs that portend the coming of the Messiah and the end of the time of exile. Nevertheless, the eschatological context does not condition the reference to God as Father since the phrase "our Father in heaven" is a thrice repeated refrain, but on the first two occasions it is not a refrain to an eschatological statement.

<sup>2</sup>Rabbi Meir (ca. A.D. 150) was perhaps the most outspoken proponent of the view that Jews remained sons even when they committed sins. This view is ascribed to him in three entirely different sayings: Kiddushin, 36a; Deut. Rabbah, 2.24; and Sifre Deut., on 14.1, 308, 133ab. But as Jeremias, Prayers, p. 19 says, Rabbi Meir's is an isolated voice. The predominant idea is that God is Father of the righteous.

have nothing to do with this nation. Why?—Because they are My children" (Lev. Rabbah, 18.3).<sup>1</sup> The fact that the writer goes on to quote Dt. 14.1 as verification for this statement shows that he is working with an essentially Old Testament idea. The corporative idea is borne out in a very different fashion by Mekilta Pisha, I on Ex. 12.1, which discusses the three types of Old Testament prophets:

One insisted upon the honor due the Father [God] as well as the honor due the son [Israel]; one insisted upon the honor due the Father without insisting upon the honor due the son; and one insisted upon the honor due the son without insisting upon the honor due the Father.<sup>2</sup>

The singular use of "son" here is very much like the uses found in Ex. 4.22-23 and Jub. 2.20.

Although the theme of corporative sonship certainly predominates, the rabbis do refer to God as the Father of the individual as well. Where allusions to God as the Father of the individual occur, they represent a logical extension of the idea of corporative sonship; if God is the Father of all devout Jews collectively, then he is also the Father of each individual within the group. Thus, in a rather well-known exhortation, Rabbi Judah ben Tema addresses individuals in the second person singular saying, "Be strong as the leopard, (and) light as the eagle, (and) fleet as the hart, and mighty as the lion to do the will of thy Father ( אֱלֹהֶיךָ ) who is in Heaven" (Aboth, 5.20).<sup>3</sup> In Mekilta Bahodesh, 6 on Ex. 20.6, it is said concerning the martyrs of Hadrian's persecution that they attested as individuals, "These wounds caused me to be beloved of My Father in heaven." More common than first or second person references to God as Father are those of the third person singular.<sup>4</sup> Thus, when Rabbi Eliezer was arrested on suspicion of being a Min (a Christian), he told the judge, "'I acknowledge the judge as right.'

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<sup>1</sup>All quotations from the Midrash Rabbah are taken from Midrash Rabbah, ed. by H. Friedman and M. Simon (1951), vol. 1-7.

<sup>2</sup>All quotations from the Mekilta are from J. Lauterbach, Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael (1933), vol. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup>All quotations from the Mishna are from P. Blackman, Mishnayoth (1964), vol. 1-6.

<sup>4</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 21-22. In notes 40 and 41 he lists all the references to father accompanied by first or second singular pronouns.



The governor thought that he referred to him—though he really referred to his Father in Heaven—and said, 'Because thou hast acknowledged me as right, I pardon; thou art acquitted'" (Abodah Zarah, 16b).<sup>1</sup>

Quite apart from the question whether particular references to the Father-son motif are corporative or individualistic in application, there is the important matter of how the image is used. Sometimes the Father-son language was employed because it was particularly suited for connoting certain things about the relationship between God and his people. But other times the terms were used because they suggested the existence of a special relation between God and Israel.<sup>2</sup> The love of God for his children is clearly enunciated by Rabbi Akiba when he says, "Beloved (of God) are Israel, for they were called children of the Omnipresent; but by a special love was it made known to them that they were called children of the Omnipresent, as it is said, ye are children unto the Eternal your God" (Aboth, 3.14). God's Fatherly love and compassion were exercised especially with respect to Israel's sins. In Yoma, 8.9 it says, "Happy are ye, O Israel, before whom do you cleanse yourselves and who cleanses you? Your Father that is in heaven."<sup>3</sup> In another text it relates how the prophets implored God to be merciful to Israel when the people were in distress: "God asked them, 'For whom do you plead mercy?' and they replied, 'For thy own children . . . Just as a father has mercy on his children though they have sinned, so must Thou have mercy on them,' as it says, 'But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father'" (Ex. Rabbah, 46.4). According to the very late work of Num. Rabbah, 17.1, God's Fatherhood of Israel entailed the same five specific obligations incumbent upon any Jewish father, namely, he must: 1) circumcise his son; 2) teach him Torah; 3) redeem him; 4) teach him handicraft; and 5) take a wife for him.

Just as the Fatherhood of God implied his love and compassion towards Israel, the sonship of Israelites suggested certain things

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Kilaim, 9.8; Gen. Rabbah, 71 on 29.32; Siphra Deut. 48 on 11.22; and Berakoth, 30a. Certain exceptional individuals are said to have been called "sons" by a heavenly voice. See Vermes, Jesus, pp. 206ff.

<sup>2</sup>E.g., Pesikta Rabbati, 104b. <sup>3</sup>Cf. Deut. Rabbah, 2.24.

about their relation towards God. Sonship placed on the sons the obligation to be obedient by doing the will of their Father, by receiving his Torah,<sup>1</sup> and keeping his commandments. This idea is well put by Rabbi Judah ben Shalom who relates that God told Israel, "When are you My children? When you receive My words . . . . If you wish to be distinguished as My children, then occupy yourselves with the (study of the) Torah and with the precepts, and all will see that you are My children" (Deut. Rabbah, 7.9). The matter of obedience to God was so important that Rabbi Akiba made it the standard for distinguishing whether Israel was a son or a servant: "You are called both sons and servants. When you carry out the desires of the Omnipresent you are called 'sons,' and when you do not carry out the desires of the Omnipresent, you are called 'servant'" (Baba Batra, 10a).<sup>2</sup>

Despite the important and weighty obligations of sonship, it also entailed special privileges. As Sotah, 9.15 shows, Israel's sonship enabled them to trust in God, their heavenly Father, in times of acute distress. Sonship also allowed Israel to have confidence for the time of judgment (Midrash Ps., 128.7). However, the ultimate privilege of sonship for Israel was to know God as Father, to know his love and his mercy.

In summary, it may fairly be said of the rabbis, that they basically follow the lines of development already established in the Old Testament and the intertestamental literature. They show no

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<sup>1</sup>In actuality, the keeping of the law was both an obligation and a privilege in Rabbinic thought. This is lucidly demonstrated by a remark from Rabbi Judah ben Shalom concerning the Mishnah, i.e., the oral law. Rabbi Judah said: "Moses desired that the Oral Law (lit. Mishnah) should be written also. But God foresaw that the Gentiles would one day translate the Torah and read it in Greek, and say, 'They (the Jews) are not (the true) Israel.' God said to Moses, 'The nations will say, "We are the sons of God." And now the scales are evenly balanced.' So God said to the Gentiles, 'Why do you claim to be my sons? I know only him who has my mystery in his possession; he is my son.' Then the Gentiles asked, 'What is Thy mystery?' God replied, 'It is the Mishnah.'" (Pesikta Rabbati, 14b). The polemic regarding who are the true sons of God is undoubtedly directed against Christians, but the point is clear: to possess and to keep the Oral Law was the highest privilege which God has granted to his true sons.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Sifre Num., 112 on Deut. 32.5, and Pesikta Rabbati, 132b which express a similar idea.



real reservation about the Father-son motif precisely because it is a very poignant way of describing the relation which existed between God and his people Israel. Nevertheless, as in the Old Testament and the intertestamental literature, it remains only one of several ways of depicting God and Israel's relationship, albeit a very warm and evocative way.

The divine Father-son motif was no more central in the thought and literature of intertestamental and Rabbinic Judaism than it had been in the thought and writings of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, the idea occurs sufficiently often to indicate that it was a generally accepted image for expressing the relationship between God and his people. The preceding examination of the texts has revealed that certain important developments took place in the use of the Father-son motif in the post-Old Testament period. The most significant development, undoubtedly, was that the Father-son relation was given an individualized application with respect to righteous men. This, of course, stands in marked contrast to the Old Testament where only the Davidic kings were designated as sons of God in an individual sense. The wisdom genre of literature led in the application of sonship to the individual on the basis of righteous behavior, and in fact, until the Rabbinic period, individual sonship was limited to wisdom and wisdom-like contexts, except that figures of antiquity were designated as sons of God on occasion (cf. Jub. 2.20, 19.29; Joseph and Asenath, 6.2, 6; 13.10; 21.3).

The second major development of the intertestamental period was the tendency to use the Father-son image in eschatological contexts. This tendency was adumbrated in the Old Testament in Hos. 1.10 and Is. 63-64, but the intertestamental literature shows a proclivity for placing the recognition or use of the divine Father-son relation in eschatologically orientated passages. It is difficult to suggest a reason for this, but W. Twisselmann may be right when he says,

Weil die Sünde und Schuld ein Hindernis für die Gotteskindschaft war und wegen der dauernden Gefahr zu sündigen, nur selten die Zuversichtlichkeit und Gewissheit eines innigen Kindschaftsverhältnisses zu Gottes aufkommen. Deshalb erwartete man die Gotteskindschaft als Heilsgut erst von

der messianischen Zukunft.<sup>1</sup>

A third innovation was characteristic exclusively of Hellenistic Jewish writings, especially Philo. (Cf. Sibylline Oracles, Book 3.) Following Greek ideas, the Fatherhood of God was given cosmological and genealogical significance, and sonship was given philosophical and metaphysical qualities.

Despite its innovations, the literature which has been examined has much in common with the Old Testament use of the Father-son motif. In the first place, sonship is still generally the special privilege of the people of Israel because of their unique relation with God. Also it continues to have an ethical demand, and the paternal-filial relationship often includes a warm and personal element. Although individualized sonship occurs, corporative sonship still predominates.

### C. The Synoptic Gospels

Romans 9.4, 6-8, 25-26; 2 Cor. 6.18 and the eschatological orientation of sonship in Rom. 8.18-22 show quite clearly that Paul's understanding of the Father-son idea in relation to God and believers must be seen against the apostle's Jewish background. But Rom. 8.15 and Gal. 4.6 show that it must also be seen in conjunction with the teachings of Jesus. In Rom. 8.15 and Gal. 4.6 Paul introduces the designation "Abba, Father" for God in the contexts of discussions about believer sonship. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, the address of God as "Abba" appears to have been a hallmark of Jesus' own relation with God—a relationship into which he brought his disciples. Another feature of Paul's use of the "Father" designation for God has a clear connection with the Gospel tradition. Paul distinguished between God as "our Father" (cf. esp. 2 Cor. 1.2 and Col. 1.2) and God as the Father of "our Lord Jesus Christ" (cf. esp. 2 Cor. 1.3 and Col. 1.3). The Synoptic Gospels reveal a similar differentiation when Jesus speaks of "my Father" (cf. for example, Matt. 10.32-33; 11.27; 12.50; 16.17; 18.10, 14; 26.19; Lk. 10.22; 22.19) and "your Father" (cf. for example, Mt. 5.16; 45; 6.1, 4, 8, 9; 7.11; 10.20; Mk. 11.25; Lk. 6.36; 12.30, 32). In light of these

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<sup>1</sup>W. Twisselmann, Die Gotteskindschaft der Christen nach dem Neuen Testament (1939), p. 32.



connections between Paul and Gospel tradition it is necessary to examine the Father-son idea in the teachings of Jesus for the illumination it sheds on Paul's use of the concept.

A study of the sonship of God's people and the Fatherhood of God in the teachings of Jesus immediately encounters certain difficulties. In the case of non-Christological sonship sayings, very few have been preserved.<sup>1</sup> All those which do exist are located in Matthew and Luke. Matthew preserves two: Mt. 5.9 and 45. Luke has a parallel saying to Mt. 5.45 in Lk. 6.35, as well as an independent one of his own in Lk. 20.36. The infrequency of reference to non-Christological sonship in the Synoptic Gospels is problematic. It gives credibility to the view of Ernst Lohmeyer that sonship was a later inference drawn from Jesus' teaching about the Fatherhood of God.<sup>2</sup> It is possible, however, that the expansion of Christological Sonship into the Gospel traditions led to a corresponding suppression of references to non-Christological sonship. That sonship probably formed an element in the eschatological teaching of Jesus is supported by the fact that sonship was looked for as a blessing of the eschatological age in Palestinian Judaism (cf. Jub. 1.24-25 and Ps. of Sol. 17.30).

In contrast to non-Christological sonship sayings, the Gospels abound with "Fatherhood" sayings. But on closer examination the very distribution of the "Fatherhood" sayings raises a problem for getting back to the teaching of Jesus. Mark, the earliest Gospel, has only four references to the Fatherhood of God, while Luke has

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<sup>1</sup>E. Lohmeyer, "Our Father." An Introduction to the Lord's Prayer (1965), pp. 48-49, observes that the parables which speak of father and children must be excluded because "they are only analogies which, while preparing for believers to be called children of God, do not say this outright." The one parable which explicitly refers to God as Father and the disciples as sons, the parable of the weeds (Mt. 13.36-43), does so in an explanation added by the church community. Lohmeyer further suggests that the sayings of Jesus concerning children cannot be accepted either, because they are not clearly connected with the idea of the children of God. Cf. H.F.D. Sparks, "The Doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood in the Gospels," Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R.H. Lightfoot (1955), p. 255, the second note.

<sup>2</sup>Lohmeyer, "Our Father," pp. 48-49.

seventeen, Matthew forty-five, and John an amazing one-hundred-eighteen.<sup>1</sup> These statistics suggest that in the course of time a tendency existed to increase the number of references to the Fatherhood of God within the Gospel tradition. This suggestion is clearly borne out when the Synoptic Gospels are compared with one another.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. The Father Material in the Synoptic Gospels

Mark and Luke's references to the Fatherhood of God are easily summarized. Mark has four instances of the word "Father." Three times it is employed as a name for God (Mk. 8.38; 11.25; 13.32) and once it is an address to God in prayer (Mk. 14.36). Mk. 8.38; 13.32; and 14.36 are concerned with God's Fatherhood in connection with Christ. Only Mk. 11.25 concerns God's Fatherhood of believers. Luke has appropriated two of the Marcan traditions: Mk. 8.38 at Lk. 9.36, and Mk. 14.36 at Lk. 22.49. In addition, he has nine instances from Q, namely: Lk. 6.36; 10.21 (twice), 10.22 (three times); 11.2, 13; and 12.30. The remaining six occurrences in Luke are unique to him: Lk. 2.49; 12.32, 22.29; 23.34, 46; and 24.49. The first and last of these six may be excluded from consideration since they are not from the ministry of Jesus. The pericope of Lk. 12.32 is indeed very old, perhaps even going back to Jesus. The term "Father" in Lk. 22.29 looks like a late development because the Matthean parallel, 19.28 does not mention the Father. It would be very surprising as we shall see, if Matthew omitted a "Father" reference from the tradition. Luke 23.34 and 46 appear to be part of the Lucan reworking of his sources or a derivation from a separate passion source from the one used by Mark.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The complexities involved in comparing John with the Synoptic Gospels and in isolating authentic sayings of Jesus preclude our discussing Johannine material in the pages which follow. On the sonship idea in John see M. Vellanicke, The Divine Sonship of Christians in the Johannine Writings (1978).

<sup>2</sup>A comparison will help to isolate the material with the greatest claim to authenticity.

<sup>3</sup>The textual evidence for Lk. 23.34 is perhaps weighted against its inclusion in the original text of Luke, but as E.E. Ellis, The Gospel of Luke (1966), p. 267 suggests, other factors favor its inclusion such as Luke's "ignorance motif" and its connection with Acts 7.60.



Only Lk. 6.36; 11.2; 11.13; 12.30; and 12.32 relate to God as the Father of the elect. The other twelve occurrences of the "Father" designation in Luke are Christological in orientation.

The case of Matthew is somewhat more complicated. Matthew has a parallel for all four of the Marcan occurrences (Mt. 6.14, par. Mk. 11.25; Mt. 16.27, par. Mk. 8.38; Mt. 24.36, par. Mk. 13.32; Mt. 26.39, par. Mk. 14.36), but he also adds the "Father" designation to his Marcan material on four occasions (Mt. 12.50; 20.23; 26.29; 26.42). He takes up the word "Father" in all the Q-sayings where it occurs in Luke (Mt. 5.48, par. Lk. 6.36; Mt. 6.9, par. Lk. 11.2; Mt. 6.32, par. Lk. 12.30; Mt. 7.11, par. Lk. 11.13; Mt. 11.25, 26, par. Lk. 10.21, twice; Mt. 11.27, three times, par. Lk. 10.22, three times). In addition "Father" is found in six Q contexts where it does not occur in the Lucan parallels (Mt. 5.45, cf. Lk. 6.35; Mt. 6.26, cf. Lk. 12.24; Mt. 10.20, cf. Lk. 12.12; Mt. 10.29, 32, 33; cf. Lk. 12.6, 8, 9). This poses the question did Matthew or Luke alter the Q-sayings at the points where Father is found, or did both alter Q at different times? A further question must be raised: Did Matthew insert ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς or its equivalent into the Q-sayings at Mt. 5.45, 5.48, 6.32, where Luke has ὑψίστου in one and ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν in the other two? T.W. Manson argues concerning the Q-sayings that "'Father,' 'heavenly Father,' and especially 'Father in heaven,' are favorite words with the First Evangelist, and that he was apt to insert them in his text even when some other expression was used in his sources."<sup>1</sup> This statement needs some clarification. In the case of Mark, Matthew did add four "Father" sayings, but only one contained an "in heaven" reference, that is, Mt. 12.50 which reads "τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς." All four, however, have "my Father" in some form. In other words, Matthew was more interested in fostering a "my Father" tradition, than simply a "heavenly Father" or "Father in heaven" tradition. This looks to be the case in Mt. 10.32, 33 as well, where Matthew altered the original Q-saying, "before the angels of God" (cf. Lk. 12.8-9) to "before my Father in heaven."<sup>2</sup> The fact that Luke

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<sup>1</sup>T.W. Manson, The Teaching of Jesus (1931), p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>On the originality of Luke's "the Angels of God" see Kümmel, Promise, p. 44.

and Mark know the "ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς" tradition (Lk. 11.13, ὁ πατήρ ὃς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, cf. Mt. 7.11; and Mk. 11.25, ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὃ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, cf. Mt. 6.14) shows that it is not exclusively Matthean. It is possible that Luke has eliminated the original Q reading "ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὃ οὐρανοῖς" (Mt. 5.45) in 6.35 and replaced it with ὑψίστου which appears to be redactional (cf. Lk. 1.32, 35, 76; 2.14). If this is the case, then Mt. 5.48; 6.26, 32; 10.29 may all preserve the original reading of Q against Luke.<sup>1</sup> Luke may have preferred to avoid the expression "in the heavens" because of his Greek audience.<sup>2</sup> With respect to Mt. 10.20, par. Lk. 12.12, the version of Luke is probably redactional given Luke's interest in the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk. 1.35, 41, 67; 2.26; 4.1; 10.21; 11.13, and Acts. 1.5, 8; 2.4; etc.). It is possible that Matthew has retained the original reading of Q here, though it is by no means certain.<sup>3</sup>

What emerges from the analysis above is that Matthew introduced "my Father" into the traditions of Mark and Q on six occasions. When this is added to the fact that he has fourteen additional instances of "my Father," thirteen of which do not occur anywhere else,<sup>4</sup> it is safe to conclude that Matthew has a special interest in God as the Father of Jesus. Luke only has four "my Father" references (2.49; 10.22; 22.29; 24.49) and only one of these, 10.22 is held in common with Matthew. The rest appear to be redactional or later traditions. This leads to the startling fact that the distinctive "my Father" formulation hangs on only one tradition which has

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<sup>1</sup>Van Iersel, Der Sohn, pp. 103-104. Cf. H.T. Wrege, Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Bergpredigt (1968), p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Schrenk, "πατήρ," pp. 985-986 who says, "It is obvious that Lk. sometimes cuts down the longer 'Father in the heavens' as a Jewish expression. Suspect is υἱοῖ ὑψίστου in Lk. 6.35 where Mt. 5.45 has: υἱοῖ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. Lk. 11.13. . . gives us even more reason to suppose that here the original Q is better preserved in Mt. It is probable that Lk. made changes consonant with his purpose of writing for the Gr. world."

<sup>3</sup>Van Iersel, Der Sohn, pp. 96-97 thinks Luke has suppressed a Father saying in 12.12; however, cf. Schrenk, "πατήρ," p. 986.

<sup>4</sup>Mt. 7.21; 8.21; 15.13; 16.17; 18.10, 14, 19, 35, 23.9; 25.34, 41; 26.29, 53.



any strong claim to antiquity, Mt. 11.27, par. Lk. 10.22. But as we have suggested in the chapter on the background to Christological Sonship, this saying is probably authentic and reflects Jesus' unique Sonship relation with God.

Matthew adds nine "ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν (or σοῦ)" sayings to those already mentioned above.<sup>1</sup> The effect of this, when taken with his ὁ πατήρ μου additions, is to accent the difference between Jesus and his disciples, a clearly Christological motif. Nevertheless, the earliest tradition provided a basis for making this differentiation, a differentiation which exists in Paul as well (cf. 2 Cor. 1.2-3).

The problem of whether the various expressions related to "ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς" are specifically Matthean is less clear than sometimes thought. Both Mark and Luke know the phrase. Mark has too few Father references to say much more. Luke has conceivably on occasion suppressed the phrase from his Q source as being inappropriate for his readers. Matthew includes it in only three of the six Father sayings he introduced into his Marcan and Q sources. The probability is thus that "ὁ πατήρ ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς" and its equivalents are largely pre-Matthean in origin, and may go back to Jesus himself.<sup>2</sup>

The reasons for the extreme variations in the use of the term "Father" in the Synoptic Gospels may be summarized as follows: Mark with his shorter Gospel and his primary interest in action, dialogue and narrative naturally did not find room for "Father" expressions which were most prevalent in the teaching material.<sup>3</sup> The Q tradition preserved a number of sayings in which the term "Father" was used of God, and these were taken over by both Matthew

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<sup>1</sup>Mt. 5.16; 6.1, 4, 6(X2), 8, 15, 18 (X2) (cf. Mt. 23.9). It is worth noting that of the twenty instances of the "your Father" designations, seventeen are in the Sermon on the Mount.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 31-32, Schrenk, "πατήρ," 5, p. 986 says, "In Mt. we have to reckon not merely with Jewish assimilation but also with real elements of authentic tradition. Without attempting solve the problem in pedantic biographical style, we might say that Jesus used both 'Father' and 'Father in the heavens.' How often it is authentic in the texts there can be no saying."

<sup>3</sup>It is certainly possible that Mark simply did not have extensive material available from which to select Father sayings. H.W. Montefiore, "God as Father in the Synoptic Gospels," NTS 3 (1956-57), p. 34 concludes after an examination of the twenty-one occasions where the word God is used in Mark, that "Father" would have been inappropriate in every instance.

and Luke. Luke adopted one old traditional usage independently (Lk. 12.32). (It could have been a part of the Q material passed over by Matthew.) He has constructed Lk. 22.29; 23.34, 46 or perhaps derived them from other sources. Matthew has added a number of "Father" sayings into traditions which had not previously possessed them and has taken up independent "Father" traditions as well, in order to develop his "Father-Son theology."

## 2. The Fatherhood of God in the Teaching of Jesus

Given the number of "Father" sayings in the Synoptic Gospels, and the complexity of determining each one's tradition history, it is impossible to search out all those sayings which might prove authentic or at least very early. Instead, we propose to examine the one Marcan non-Christological "Fatherhood" saying along with those Q-sayings where both Matthew and Luke have preserved the "Father" designation in non-Christological contexts. This represents an easily manageable number of texts, and these have an inherent claim to antiquity. Whether or not they are all authentic dominical sayings, they provide an indication of the tradition associated with the teaching of Jesus regarding the Fatherhood of God as it would have been available to Paul. From our study of Christological Sonship in the Synoptic Gospels, we must bear in mind that Jesus apparently understood himself to have a unique Sonship relation with God which permitted him to distinguish between his relationship with God as his Father and that of his disciples.

We may begin our examination with the "Father" address in the Lord's Prayer since it quite clearly reflects Jesus' own teaching on the Fatherhood of God and has relevance for the origin of the "abba" tradition in the early Church.

The Lord's Prayer has come down in two quite distinct forms. Luke 11.2-4 represents the more original length of the prayer but not necessarily the more original content.<sup>1</sup> Luke alters some of the original elements, most notably the eschatological character of the

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<sup>1</sup>W. Grundmann, Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (1971<sup>2</sup>), p. 199, says, "Der Vergleich zwischen den beiden Fassungen ergibt, dass Lukas im Gesamtduktus der Urfassung näherstehen dürfte, jedoch in den Einzelaussagen Matthäus den Vorzug verdient." See Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 89-94.



third petition of his version of the prayer (cf. the fourth petition of Matthew's version). Matthew's σήμερον and aorist imperative δός in the request for bread is much more expectant of the consummation that Luke's τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν with the present imperative δίδου, which seems to look to an extended period of time in the life of the church.<sup>1</sup> There is good reason to believe, moreover, that τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον refers to bread for the "coming day" and the bread of life in the eschatological age,<sup>2</sup> but Luke has toned this down by his τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν.<sup>3</sup> Matthew 6.9-13 conforms more to liturgical usage as the expansions and balance of the prayer indicate,<sup>4</sup> though as was suggested above, Matthew does provide a more original reading at several points.<sup>5</sup>

This leads to the important question whether Matthew or Luke's address to God in the Lord's Prayer is the more original.<sup>6</sup> Against the main current of scholarly opinion, W. Marchel seeks to argue: "Matthieu paraît donc avoir respecté et conservé littéralement l'invocation primitive, telle qu'elle a été prononcée par Jésus."<sup>7</sup> He argues first against the normal view that Abba stands behind the πάτερ of Luke 11.2 and that this form goes back to Jesus. He maintains:

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<sup>1</sup>R.E. Brown, New Testament Essays (1965), p. 239; Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 91-92; and Ellis, Luke, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup>Hill, Matthew, pp. 137-138 and Lohmeyer, "Our Father," pp. 250-252. See also Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 100-102. However, see the discussion of Black, Aramaic Approach, pp. 203-207 for an argument that Luke has preserved the original meaning of the petition which was presumably non-eschatological in intent.

<sup>3</sup>Lohmeyer, "Our Father," pp. 250-252.

<sup>4</sup>Davies, Sermon on the Mount, pp. 5, 310-313; Grundmann, Matthäus, p. 199; and Jeremias, Prayers, pp. 89-94.

<sup>5</sup>This is especially true of the bread and forgiveness petitions. On the forgiveness petition see Lohmeyer, "Our Father," pp. 160-162.

<sup>6</sup>On the originality of the πάτερ of Lk. 11.2 see Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 154.

<sup>7</sup>Marchel, Abba, p. 188. Brown, Essays, p. 225, n. 31 suggests a similar possibility but does not seem to favor it.





(cf. Mk. 2.13-17). In short, Jesus was not a person who was inhibited by the piety of his day for the very reason that he possessed authority which transcended social and religious customs. In light of this, Jesus would not have hesitated to teach his disciples an address which ran contrary to the piety of his day—if it conveyed a true understanding of God, and this is exactly what Jesus thought the term "Abba" did. The very fact that Jesus himself used Abba in his prayers means that the disciples were familiar with the word as an address to God. By granting to his disciples the privilege of addressing God as Abba in the prayers which he taught them he extended to them the intimate relation which he himself had with God. The occurrence of Abba in Rom. 8.15 and Gal. 4.6 shows that the address was preserved in the early traditions of the church as something of great significance. The most reasonable explanation of this fact is that Jesus passed it on to his disciples in his teaching on prayer.<sup>1</sup> But quite clearly the disciples' encounter with God as "Abba" derived from Jesus' unique relation with God, and therefore from the very beginning, a distinction existed between Jesus' relation to the Father and that of his disciples which is embodied in the contrasting "my Father" and "your Father" sayings.

Mark 11.25, which contains a primitive tradition, if not an authentic saying of Jesus, employs the formula "your Father" in a saying spoken to the disciples by Jesus: καὶ ὅταν στήκετε προσευχόμενοι, ἀφίετε εἴ τι ἔχετε κατὰ τινος, ἵνα καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἀφῇ ὑμῖν τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν. This verse is often discussed in terms of Mt. 6.14 with the implication that the Marcan form somehow represents a tradition secondary to the Matthean version (cf. Mt. 6.14).<sup>2</sup> The argument has been pressed to its ultimate by H.F.D. Sparks who avers that Mk. 11.25, like Mk. 11.26, is an addition to the original text of Mark taken from Mt. 6.14, though no textual

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<sup>1</sup>Wrege, Bergpredigt, pp. 102-103; and Grundmann, Matthäus, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. S.E. Johnson, A Commentary on the Gospel According to Mark (1960), p. 192; and D.E. Nineham, The Gospel of St. Mark (1968<sup>2</sup>), p. 305. For a fuller treatment on the relation of Mk. 11.25 to the Gospel of Matthew see this writer's forthcoming essay "Mark 11:25 and the Gospel of Matthew," in the Papers of the Oxford Congress on Biblical Studies, 1977, vol. 2.

traditions have preserved a version of Mark which does not contain 11.25.<sup>1</sup> This factor alone is strong evidence against Sparks' hypothesis. His principal arguments against the textual integrity of Mk. 11.25 are that it breaks the context of Mk. 11.24, and it is absent from the Matthean parallel passage Mt. 21.20-27, essentially a reproduction of Mk. 11.20-33, except for vss. 25-26. He further finds a number of Matthean characteristics in Mk. 11.25. All of these arguments have weaknesses. The connection between vss. 24 and 25 in Mark is loose, but both verses do set forth conditions for efficacious prayer. The fact that Matthew had already used a form of Mk. 11.25 in Mt. 6.14, with its obverse expression in vs. 15 ("if you do not forgive neither will your Father forgive"), in a more appropriate context may have prevented him from repeating it in the original context of his Marcan source (cf. also Mt. 18.35 where a similar form of the expression occurs at the end of the parable of the unforgiving servant). Finally, Sparks' instances of Matthean language in Mk. 11.25 are very questionable. He says παράπτωμα is more Matthean than Marcan but it only occurs twice in Matthew and both instances are in Mt. 6.14-15, the very passage in dispute. The same problem is true of "ἔχειν τι κατὰ τινος which only occurs once in Matthew at 5.23. The phrase "your Father which is in heaven" is typical of Matthew, but it is not his exclusive possession, as we have seen already. In short, there is little reason to doubt that Mk. 11.25 was in the original version of Mark, nor is there any reason to treat it as being more Matthean than Marcan. In fact it is possible that Matthew has taken it from Mark and given it a new context. The expanded positive-negative character of the saying in Mt. 6.14-15 with its connection to the liturgical form of the Lord's Prayer, however, suggests an already existing liturgical usage of the Matthean community.

Although probably isolated from its original context, Mk. 11.25, as it stands, is addressed to the disciples (cf. 11.21-22). Matthew's version of the saying is definitely intended for the disciples, and there is no reason to doubt that this was not true of the original saying, whether it goes back to Jesus or not. The description of

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<sup>1</sup> Sparks, "Divine Fatherhood," pp. 244-245.



God presented to the disciples, "ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς" clearly separates Jesus from the disciples. The saying emphasizes Jesus' authority to mediate the will of the Father to the disciples (cf. Mt. 11.27). In this case Jesus commands his disciples to forgive others if they expect their Father to forgive them of their own trespasses.

Several more examples of ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν formulations are found in Q material preserved by both Matthew and Luke. Luke 6.36 par. Mt. 5.48 offers one instance:

Γίνεσθε οἰκτίρμονες, καθὼς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν οἰκτίρμων ἐστίν (Lk. 6.36).	Ἔσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι ὡς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τέλειός ἐστιν (Mt. 5.48).
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The basic thrust of both versions of the tradition is that the disciples should imitate an aspect of God's nature, a common Jewish idea.<sup>1</sup> The question of whether the τέλειος of Matthew or the οἰκτίρμων of Luke more faithfully preserves the original saying has brought forth several alternative explanations.<sup>2</sup> The most convincing view is the one held by Heinz Schürmann that by using τέλειος in the saying "Matth weitet ins Grundsätzliche aus und beschliesst den Abschnitt in Rückblick auf 5, 20" so that τέλειος is redactional (cf. Mt. 19.21 and par).<sup>3</sup> This is further supported by

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<sup>1</sup>H. Schürmann, Das Lukasevangelium. Erster Teil (1969), p. 360. In the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, on Lev. 22.28 there is an almost exact parallel in the first person plural.

<sup>2</sup>Black, Aramaic Approach, p. 181, argues that paronomasia exists in Mt. 5.47-48 in Aramaic. The Greek ἀσπάζεσθαι of vs. 47 renders the Aramaic shelam and the τέλειος of vs. 48 renders shelima. His view is dependent upon the juxtaposition of vss. 47-48 in the Aramaic tradition, but this is far from certain since there is no formal connection between the two verses. Matthew uses vs. 48 as a summarizing verse which suggests its present location is redactional (cf. the order of Lk. 6.35-36). (Cf. Wrege, Bergpredigt, p. 87 on this point.) Further, vs. 48 combines not only some of the actual words of the LXX translation of Lev. 19.2 and Dt. 18.13 (ἔσεσθε and τέλειοι) but also the ideas of the two verses. Interestingly, the τέλειοι of Dt. 18.13 is a translation of ܠܬܝܡܢܐ, not ܠܬܝܡܢܐ. (Hill, Matthew, p. 131, also takes the view of Black.) Grundmann, Matthäus, p. 181, following a suggestion by K. Bornhäuser, offers the possibility that the τέλειος of Matthew "von einer etwaigen aramäischen Grundlage her im Sinne von barmherzig, gut (vgl. 19, 17) gedeutet werden muss." This is based on the occurrence of ܠܬܝܡܢܐ in Baba Kamma 1, 4; but the relationship of this Mishna passage to the idea of mercy is not immediately clear because it speaks about harmless and dangerous animals.

<sup>3</sup>Schürmann, Lukasevangelium, p. 360. Cf. Jeremias, Prayers, p. 41, and Van Iersel, Der Sohn, p. 98.

the fact that οἰκτίρων is a common characteristic of God in the Old Testament, but τέλειος is not. The use of the term "Father" for God in this pericope creates a sense of relationship with the Father for the disciples; they are called to act like good sons by imitating their Father.

Another ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν formula occurs in Mt. 6.32 par. Lk. 12.30:

πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα [food and drink]	ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα τὰ
τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιζητοῦσιν· οἶδεν	ἔθνη τοῦ κόσμου ἐπιζητοῦσιν·
γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος	ὑμῶν δὲ ὁ πατήρ οἶδεν
ὅτι χρῆζετε τούτων ἀπάντων	ὅτι χρῆζετε τούτων
(Mt. 6.32).	(Lk. 12.30).

Luke 12.22 indicates that the extended series of pericopes from 12.22-32 on anxiety were addressed to the disciples; Matthew's version is of course contained in the Sermon on the Mount. It is very probable that this saying's setting in life was the preaching of Jesus. If this is so, it was spoken to a broader audience than just the disciples. This does not, however, provide evidence for the view that Jesus proclaimed the universal Fatherhood of God. Since Jesus' audiences were Jewish,<sup>1</sup> the Fatherhood of God was a presupposition of their heritage. The implied distinction in Mt. 6.32 between the ἔθνη and the audience of Jesus was a fundamental feature of Jewish thought. The early church naturally lost sight of the fact that this saying originally embraced the Jewish people, or at least those in Jesus' audience, irrespective of whether they were disciples or not.<sup>2</sup> The use of ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν by Jesus to distinguish himself from his hearers thus may have played a significant role in the preaching and teaching of Jesus.

A final Q tradition, Mt. 7.11 contains the long "ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς" but the Lucan parallel, 11.13, has ὁ πατήρ ὁ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. The full Q-saying included Mt. 7.9-11 par. Lk. 11.11-13 and formed an a fortiori argument (πόσω μᾶλλον) that was

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<sup>1</sup>For this reason Montefiore, "God as Father," pp. 44-45 is incorrect when he infers that Jesus taught the universal Fatherhood of God because he employed the expression "your Father" in speaking to the multitudes.

<sup>2</sup>Sparks, Divine Fatherhood, pp. 247, 259-260 fails to recognize this, assuming that all the Gospel Father references (with perhaps the exception of the obscure Mt. 23.9) are either said in connection with the disciples or with Jesus himself. See also the discussion below of Mt. 7.11 par Lk. 11.13.



originally a polemical saying aimed at the opponents of Jesus who refused to trust in God as Father.<sup>1</sup> The reading of Luke which lacks the ὑμῶν is therefore the more original form, at least with respect to the ὑμῶν.

This view is supported by several considerations first put forward by A.T. Cadoux and later expanded by Dr. Jeremias.<sup>2</sup> The shift from the second person to the third person is unexpected in Mt. 7.11 (and Lk. 11.13): ὑμεῖς πονηροὶ ὄντες οἴδατε δόματα ἀγαθὰ διδόναι τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν . . . ὁ πατήρ . . . δώσει ἀγαθὰ τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν αὐτόν. The change in persons contrasts "those who ask" with "you who are evil." In Mt. 12.34 Jesus addresses the Pharisees as πονηροὶ ὄντες which indicates these words are more than just a generalized comparison of man to God.<sup>3</sup> The pericope itself is introduced by τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν which is also used in addressing Jesus' opponents on other occasions (cf. Mt. 12.11, par. Lk. 14.5; Lk. 15.4). To these may be added the fact that πονηρός is polemical in a number of other passages, (cf. Lk. 11.29, par. Mt. 12.39; Mt. 12.45; 15.19; 16.4). The saying concerning the eschatological good things (ἀγαθά) which the Father gives to those who ask him has thus lost its original significance and has become part of Jesus' instruction on prayer. In light of this, the ὑμῶν qualifying God as Father is a secondary expansion in Matthew,<sup>4</sup> making the saying appropriate to its present context, but it was alien to the setting in Jesus' ministry. The use of ὁ πατήρ as a designation for God is probably conditioned by the father-son analogy at the beginning of the pericope. If, as we suggested above, Jesus used the ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν to his audiences in preaching, the absence of it in a polemical saying is all the more striking. It implies Jesus did not consider God to be related

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<sup>1</sup> J. Jeremias, Parables, p. 145 suggests the polemic was specifically directed towards the religious elite who found Jesus' behavior towards religious outcasts unacceptable.

<sup>2</sup> A.T. Cadoux, The Parables of Jesus. Their Art and Use (no date), pp. 76-77, and Jeremias, Parables, pp. 144-145.

<sup>3</sup> This is the view of Hill, Matthew, pp. 148-149 and Grundmann, Matthäus, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> Jeremias, Prayers, p. 37.

to his Jewish enemies (presumably the enemies of God as well) as Father (cf. Mt. 11.25-26 and in Paul, Rom. 9.6ff.).

### 3. The Sons of God in the Synoptic Tradition

The disciple sonship passages are indeed very few, but all three of the ones which are extant are eschatological in orientation and may well be authentic dominical sayings.

Luke 6.35 and its Matthean parallel, 5.44-45, both present an ethical instruction which leads to a statement about divine sonship. The wording of the Lucan form better retains the original eschatological character of the preaching of Jesus than does Mt. 5.45;<sup>1</sup> the reward promised for loving one's enemies, doing good, and lending without expectation of return is future (ἔσται ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς), and consist in the promise of sonship (ἔσεσθε υἱοὶ ὑψίστου).<sup>2</sup> Luke's eschatological sonship comports well with the eschatological nature of sonship in intertestamental Palestinian Judaism (cf. Jub. 1.24-25; Ps. of Sol. 17.27, 30; and Ass. of Moses 10.3). It is from these and similar sources that Jesus may well have derived his own teaching on the eschatological character of sonship. In Matthew sonship is probably thought of as a present reality for the righteous: ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς, ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς (5.44-45).<sup>3</sup> For Matthew, sonship is the expressed goal which is attained by loving one's enemies and praying for one's persecutors; the sense of future reward is completely lacking.<sup>4</sup>

Matthew alone, has the beatitude which promises sonship. Matthew 5.9 declares:

μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί  
ὅτι [αὐτοὶ] υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.

<sup>1</sup>As we have seen above, Matthew's τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς may very well be more original than Luke's ὑψίστου.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Schürmann, Lukasevangelium, p. 355, and Schweizer, "υἱός" 8, p. 390.

<sup>3</sup>Schweizer, ibid., p. 390. Jeremias, Theology 1, p. 181, n. 3 thinks the ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ . . . of Mt. 5.45 "seems to mean 'that you (now) show yourselves to be sons . . .'"

<sup>4</sup>Wrege, Bergpredigt, p. 86.



This pericope, as one of the beatitudes, looks to the future age when God will reward those who have endured the difficulties of this age, who have been godlike in character, and who have remained faithful.<sup>1</sup> "Peacemaking" is a positive virtue in Rabbinic thought and is frequently referred to;<sup>2</sup> however, making peace was also thought to be an activity of the Messianic Age, so it is possible that this verse is a call to involvement in the age of salvation.<sup>3</sup>

The final divine sonship saying is found in Lk. 20.36 in what looks like a derivation from a special Lucan source in which "die Formulierungen semitische Sprachform tragen."<sup>4</sup> It is perhaps an attempt to explain the relationship of those who are worthy of resurrection to the heavenly hierarchy: ἰσάγγελοι γάρ εἰσιν, καὶ υἱοὶ εἰσιν θεοῦ τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ ὄντες. The eschatological character of the saying is made clear by the context (20.27-39) which deals with the future resurrection (cf. Wis. 5.5).

The Synoptic Gospels reveal that a tendency existed to multiply Fatherhood sayings in the Gospel tradition, though this is more pronounced with respect to "my Father" sayings than with respect to "your Father" sayings. Nevertheless, when account is taken of this phenomenon, we may still say with a high degree of confidence that Jesus taught the Fatherhood of God to his disciples as well as their sonship. The "your Father" and "my Father" distinction which is found in the Gospel tradition and in Paul very probably goes back to Jesus himself. At the same time it seems probable that Jesus taught his followers to pray to God using the intimate address "Abba" which was characteristic of his own relation with God. However, to the extent that the disciples entered into a special relation with God as their Father, typified by the thought and content of the Lord's Prayer, it was based on Jesus' relation with God, which arose out of his unique sense of Sonship. Paul

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<sup>1</sup>Hill, Matthew, pp. 109-110. Though as Kümmel, Promise, p. 49, n. 98 maintains, "their 'futurist'—eschatological meaning does not appear from the wording, but only from their connexion with the rest of Jesus' eschatological pronouncements."

<sup>2</sup>T.W. Manson, The Sayings of Jesus as Recorded in the Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Luke (1949), p. 151.

<sup>3</sup>Grundmann, Matthäus, pp. 131-132; and Schweizer, "υἱός," p. 390, n. 405.

<sup>4</sup>Grundmann, Lukas, p. 374.

preserved the distinction between Jesus and his followers not only in the "our Father" and the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" language but also in his use of the adoptive sonship conception (Gal. 4.5; Rom. 8.15, 23; 9.4; cf. Eph. 1.5) to characterize the sonship of Christians in contrast with the unique Sonship of the pre-existent Son of God who was sent into human existence. As we have noted before, Paul has also preserved the Abba tradition as a distinctive mark of the Christian understanding of the Father-son relation (Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.15). In summary, Paul's teaching on the sonship of believers must be seen against the background of the Father-son idea in the Old Testament and post-Old Testament Judasim as well as the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel tradition.

With this understanding of the background material and some of the connection which can be drawn from it to Paul's sonship conception in mind, we may begin our examination of the believer sonship conception in Paul's letter to the Galatians.



## CHAPTER X

### GALATIANS AND PAUL'S USE OF THE BELIEVER SONSHIP IDEA

#### A. Introduction

One of the two most extensive discussions involving the theme of believer sonship in Paul occurs in his letter to the Galatians. Paul has introduced this theme into his theological argument as a constituent element. This fact necessitates that the sonship theme undergo examination in relation to its position and function in the theological argumentation of Galatians, particularly ch. 3 and 4, rather than that it be isolated in 3.26-4.7 and treated as though it were a systematic statement of Paul's understanding of the sonship idea. This procedure will inevitably result in a less systematic discussion of sonship in what follows than if we were to talk exclusively about sonship in Gal. 3.26-29 and 4.4-7 without recourse to the theological argument of Gal. 3 and 4. The "contextualizing" approach to the sonship discussion in Gal. 3.26-4.7, however, possesses a decisive advantage with respect to our thesis. In determining Paul's thought, in this case his conception of believers as the sons of God, why something is said may prove almost as valuable as what is actually said. This is especially true since we can only recover Paul's thought through his letters which are by their very nature occasional; they seldom if ever tell us everything Paul thought or believed about anything; and they certainly were not intended as systematic statements of his theology, not even Romans.<sup>1</sup>

Only when we have completed our exegetical analysis of the

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<sup>1</sup>On the nature of the Pauline sources and the problems this poses for the study of the theology of Paul, see M.D. Hooker, Pauline Pieces (1979), pp. 7-20.

sonship texts and their contexts in Paul's epistles to the Christians in Rome and Galatia will it be possible to present anything like Paul's theology of sonship. Even then the results will have a provisional character because of the nature of the sources available to us. In the meantime we must undertake the task of discovering why Paul introduces the theme of sonship into Gal. 3 and 4 and how it is used, in an attempt to determine what its use there tells us about its place in his thought as a whole.

#### B. Paul's Opponents and the "Other Gospel"

If we are to comprehend the argument in Galatians and the place of believer sonship in it, as part of our attempt to understand the nature and significance of believer sonship in Paul's thought, we must begin with a brief discussion regarding the identity of Paul's opponents and the problem engendering the letter to the Galatians.

The question of the identity of Paul's opponents and the nature of the "other gospel, which is not another" (Gal. 1.6b-7), has received a great deal of attention from New Testament investigators and has generated considerable controversy. J.H. Ropes, writing fifty years ago, called this the "singular problem" of the epistle to the Galatians.<sup>1</sup> A history of the discussion regarding Paul's opponents and their "gospel" would require far more space than it merits within the confines of this thesis, and several recent surveys are available anyway.<sup>2</sup> It will suffice for our purposes to identify the most important positions in the current debate and then to suggest the most probable interpretation of the evidence of Galatians.

One current view, advocated by W. Schmithals, proposes that

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<sup>1</sup>J.H. Ropes, The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians (1929).

<sup>2</sup>For more extensive surveys of the history of the discussion see F.F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems 3. The 'Other' Gospel," BJRL 53 (1970-71), pp. 253-261, Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, pp. 1-18; and Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 14-24.



Paul's opponents were Jewish Christian Gnostics.<sup>1</sup> He bases his view on several pieces of evidence. Schmithals finds Paul's defence of his apostleship as coming directly from God inexplicable with respect to a Judaizing Christian interpretation since Jerusalem Christians did not have such a view of apostleship. Gnosticism, however, did have such an understanding, and therefore Schmithals asserts that it was Gnostic apostles who were active in Galatia.<sup>2</sup> He also argues that the circumcision demand fits the belief that the opponents were Gnostics because later Gnostics preached circumcision as a symbol of release from the flesh. Gal. 4.9-10 has its background in the Gnostic observation of specific times and the worship of angels. The attack on libertinism in 5.13ff. and the references to fleshly behavior (3.3; 5.13; 17.19; 6.8) also point to Gnostic adversaries.

Several scholars have followed Schmithals interpretation,<sup>3</sup> but this understanding has several weaknesses. R. McL. Wilson has detected one fundamental problem: "the view that Paul's opponents were not Judaisers but Jewish-Christian Gnostics involves the reading in of interpretations based on later sources."<sup>4</sup> For example, much of Schmithals' case rests on his claims regarding the Gnostic view of apostleship and circumcision. But our knowledge of these comes from a much later period, and thus cannot be used as evidence in the case of Galatians.<sup>5</sup> A second major problem with Schmithals'

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<sup>1</sup>W. Schmithals, "Die Häretiker in Galatien," ZNW 47 (1956), pp. 25-67, now in slightly revised form in Paulus und die Gnostiker (1965), pp. 9-46 from which quotations are taken. Others had spoken of gnostic features in Galatians before Schmithals, e.g., G. Bornkamm, "Die Häresie des Kolosserbriefes," TLZ 73 (1948), pp. 11ff. which now appears in Das Ende des Gesetzes: Paulusstudien. Gesammelte Aufsätze 1 (1961), pp. 139-156, but Schmithals gave the first systematic presentation of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup>Schmithals, Die Gnostiker, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. W. Marxsen, Introduction to the New Testament: An Approach to its Problems (1968), pp. 53-57; E. Güttgemanns, Der leidende Apostel und sein Herr (1966), pp. 177-185; and K. Wegenast, Das Verständnis der Tradition bei Paulus und in den Deuteropaulinen (1962), pp. 36ff.

<sup>4</sup>R. McL. Wilson, "Gnostics in Galatia?" Studia Evangelica 4, Texte und Untersuchungen 102 (1968), p. 366.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. ibid., pp. 361-366 and Drane, Paul, pp. 14-23, 90-91.

hypothesis is that it fails to explain satisfactorily the main arguments in chapters 3 and 4. He claims that 3.6-4.7 and 4.21-31 consist of "Topoi der Auseinandersetzung des Paulus mit den Juden über die Frage des Gesetzes." He is forced to maintain that it was not written for the Galatians originally. Its sole value in Galatians is to show that "das Gesetz kann für den Gläubenden keinerlei Geltung mehr beanspruchen." In other words, Schmithals admits that the main theological argument of Galatians is largely irrelevant to the problem encountered by Paul.<sup>1</sup> Such an admission is a damning acknowledgment of the failure of Schmithals' theory to deal with the total evidence of Galatians.

A second major interpretation of Paul's opponents in Galatia differs from Schmithals' conception primarily by degree.<sup>2</sup> A number of scholars have maintained that Paul's adversaries were syncretistic Jews.<sup>3</sup> Dieter Lührmann, for example, argues that the

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<sup>1</sup>Schmithals, Die Gnostiker, p. 29. He presupposes, "dass Paulus nur sehr spärlich über die Vorgänge in Galatien orientiert. . . . Er kennt anscheinend lediglich einige Vorwürfe bzw. Forderungen und Verhaltensweisen der Häretiker, ohne offenbar über deren Herkunft und deshalb auch über ihre Gesamthaltung Genaueres zu wissen" (p. 12). Marxsen, Introduction, p. 55 takes the same position: "The various difficulties are best solved by assuming that Paul did not fully understand the position of his opponents." If Paul did not know who they were and what they stood for, it seems highly improbable that we will ever know since he is our only source. What Schmithals and Marxsen appear to be doing is opening up Galatians to whatever interpretation they want to put on it.

<sup>2</sup>D. Georgi, Die Geschichte der Kollekte des Paulus für Jerusalem (1965), p. 35 says of the Galatian heretics in relation to Schmithals' view: "die galatischen Häretiker selbst Pneumatiker waren. Darin hat W. Schmithals recht. Nun darf man nicht wie Schmithals die Polemik des Paulus in den Kapiteln 1 und 2 und 5 und 6 von der in den Kapiteln 3 und 4 (besonders 3) isolieren. Die Pneumatiker waren auch Nomisten, judaistische Pneumatiker wie die Häretiker des Philipperbriefes, Vorläufer einer Gnosis, wie sie dann später im Kolosserbrief und in den Ignatien bekämpft wird."

<sup>3</sup>D. Lührmann, Offenbarungsverständnis, pp. 67-73. Bornkamm, Paul, pp. 82-83; Georgi, Kollekte, pp. 35-37; R.H. Fuller, The New Testament in Current Study (1962), p. 67; H. Köster, "Häretiker im Urchristentum," RGG 3, col. 18; *idem*, Trajectories through Early Christianity (1971), p. 145; Stuhlmacher, Paulinische Evangelium, pp. 65ff.; C.H. Talbert, "Again: Paul's Visit to Jerusalem," NT 9 (1967), pp. 27-35; and Schlier, Galater, pp. 19ff.



syncretists preached an ascetic observance of the law of Moses as "das Gesetz des ganzen Kosmos" which "führt zur Vollendung und gibt den Besitz des Pneuma."<sup>1</sup> Köster, on the other hand, thinks that the apparent libertinism evidenced by Gal. 5.13ff. arose from the belief of the heretics that the law of Moses was ritual law not entailing moral imperatives.<sup>2</sup> According to Lührmann, circumcision was seen as a cultic "stigma," a cultic "Schutzzeichen."<sup>3</sup> Those maintaining the syncretistic interpretation invariably base their case on the speculative understanding of the law of Moses supposedly attested by Gal. 3.19; 4.3, 8-10. Lührmann and Köster, for example, assume the phrase "ordered through angels by the hand of a mediator" in 3.19 to be a primary element in the heretics' theology and then connect this with the elemental spirits in 4.3, 8-10.<sup>4</sup> Their approach fails, however, because it isolates 3.19 from its context, and then assumes a connection between it and 4.3, 8-10. In its context Gal. 3.19 forms part of Paul's attempt to show the priority of the promises given directly to Abraham by God (3.15ff.). Because the law was given after the promises and was given through angels and the hand of a mediator, it has a secondary quality in relation to the promises which derive from the testament or covenant made by God with Abraham. Thus those holding that 3.19 reflects the nature of the opposition's view do not take serious account of the argument in which it occurs.<sup>5</sup> They also ignore the fact that it was probably

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<sup>1</sup> Lührmann, Offenbarungsverständnis, p. 69

<sup>2</sup> See Köster, "Häretiker," col. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Lührmann, Offenbarungsverständnis, p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-70. Köster, "Häretiker," col. 18.

<sup>5</sup> The idea that angels were present at the giving of the law was quite common in Judaism as Strack-Billerbeck, 3, pp. 554-556 shows (cf. Dt. 33.2; Ps. 67.18 LXX, Acts 7.53; Heb. 2.2). The idea that the angels cooperated in giving the law as in Gal. 3.19, is less common (cf. G. Dellings, "τόσω κτλ.," TDNT 8, p. 35); however, the book of Jubilees (see especially 6.22 and 30.12, 21) makes it clear that it was not unheard of. Jubilees can hardly be called a syncretistic Jewish writing. On Gal. 3.19b as disparaging the law see A. Oepke, "μεσίτης κτλ.," TDNT 4, p. 618; Schoeps, Paul, pp. 182-183, and Drane, Paul, p. 34. Drane rightly points out, "If we interpret Galatians in total independence of Romans (as its original readers had to do), it appears more likely that Paul intended the mention of angels to disparage the Law." He goes too far, however, when he adds, "on the basis of this particular passage we can only conclude that here he was meaning to issue a categorical denial of the divine origin of the Torah."



Paul who connected the law with the "elements of the world" in 4.3 and 8-10. Paul argues in 4.8-9 that acceptance of the law constitutes a return to the "weak and beggarly elements" to which the Galatians were enslaved in their pagan past in a different form. The evidence of 4.10 provides the slenderest of supports for maintaining a speculative-cosmological interpretation of the law since one could use similar language for accepting the Jewish calendar of sabbaths, months, and festivals.<sup>1</sup> The references to circumcision in Galatians can only be used in support of a syncretistic heresy if one first can prove the existence of a magical view of circumcision at this date. This has never been done.

The most reasonable view of the evidence in Galatians regarding circumcision and the law supports the contention that Paul's opponents were Judaizers who sought to compel Gentile Christians to live like Jews in order to receive the benefits of the Jewish Messiah. The Judaizing character of the opposition is supported by several points besides the general discussion of law and circumcision. In 2.14 Paul reports that he asked Peter, "If you, being a Jew, live as a Gentile and not as a Jew, how do you compel (ἀναγκάζεις) Gentiles to live as Jews (Ἰουδαΐζειν)?" The grammar of vs. 14 suggests that the Jewish Christians of Antioch, led by Peter, were in fact urging Gentile Christians to accept Jewish customs, probably to preserve the unity of the church. Whatever caused the problem at Antioch, and we believe that it was non-Christian Jews (τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς, vs. 12) putting pressure on Jewish Christians in Judea,<sup>2</sup> Paul felt the events at Antioch were relevant to the Christians of Galatia. Perhaps the Galatian problem was even connected in some way with the rise of problems in Antioch. Gal. 6.12b offers support for this view because in this verse Paul accuses his opponents of compelling (ἀναγκάζουσιν—the same word used in 2.14) the Galatians

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<sup>1</sup>It is unnecessary to see anything more in "days, moons, seasons, and years" than a reference to the keeping of the Jewish calendar. Schoeps, Paul, p. 77 and Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 299-301.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. W. Schmithals, Paul and Jesus (1965), p. 67; Schütz, Paul and Apostolic Authority, pp. 150-154; and J. Munck, Paul and the Salvation of Mankind (1959), pp. 106-108.



to be circumcised for fear of being persecuted for the cross of Christ. The persecution in this instance must have been coming from non-Christian Jews and was directed towards Jewish Christians still in the synagogue. The possibility of persecution by Jewish Christians or Gentiles hardly seems likely in 6.12. It is unlikely that Jewish Christians would persecute others on account of the cross, and it is virtually impossible to conceive of a situation in which compelling people to be circumcised would prevent persecution by Gentiles for the sake of the cross. The whole argument of 3.6-24 reflects an attempt to show that faith, righteousness, and the promises made to Abraham stand outside the law and works of the law. Such an argument makes little sense unless Paul's opponents were Judaizers. The warning of 5.3 concerning the obligation to keep the whole law, if circumcised, also comports well with a Judaizing heresy, as does the warning to those trying to be justified by the law in 5.4. In our opinion, the evidence of the letter strongly favors the view that Paul's opponents were straightforward Judaizers.<sup>1</sup> But were they Jewish Christians or Gentile Christians?

J.H. Ropes conjectured that Paul's opponents were Gentile Christians,<sup>2</sup> but it was a study by E. Hirsch that gave this view teeth.<sup>3</sup> He claimed that the present participle περιτεμνόμενοι in 6.13 pointed to Gentile Christians as the source of the heresy:

scheint mir die Stelle es völlig zu sichern, dass die von Paulus bekämpften Judaisten des Galaterbriefes ursprüngliche Heidenchristen sind, die nachträglich zur Beschneidung getreten sind. Ich kann mir das Präsens περιτεμνόμενοι nicht anders erklären denn als eine die Gleichheit der Sendboten als Neujuden jungen Datums mit den Galatern selbst unterstreichende Brandmarkung.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In spite of the numerous and ingenious attacks on the traditional view, it remains the most widely supported understanding of the problem and adversaries encountered by Paul in Galatia. See, for example, the recent discussions by Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 500-501 and esp. n. 16 which lists numerous people holding the traditional view; Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 24-25; Drane, Paul, pp. 78-94; Bruce "The 'Other' Gospel," pp. 253-261; and Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, pp. 31-71.

<sup>2</sup>Ropes, Singular Problem, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>E. Hirsch, "Zwei Fragen zu Galater 6," ZNW 29 (1930), pp. 192-197.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 193.



The present participle περιτεμνόμενοι in 6.13 is the linchpin for all those since Hirsch who have argued for the Gentile Christian Judaizer position.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this one scrap of evidence there is almost nothing else in the letter to support this contention. The view of Hirsch and others ignores an important fact. The present participle in 6.13a is no more technically correct of recently circumcised Gentiles than it is of Jews circumcised as infants.<sup>2</sup> The one possibility, if the tense of the participle is pushed, is that the οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι were a group who were in the process of undergoing circumcision. But since the opposition arose from outside the churches of Galatia,<sup>3</sup> it seems improbable that such a group could have convincingly compelled the Galatians to be circumcised. It also seems doubtful that Paul would have missed pointing out the tenuity of their position as uncircumcised preachers of circumcision. Other interpretations of the present participle are plausible. J.B. Lightfoot understood the disputed participle as middle, instead of passive, and rendered it "the advocates of circumcision," citing Acts of Peter and Paul 63 in support of this rendering.<sup>4</sup> H. Schlier

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<sup>1</sup>J. Munck, Paul, pp. 87-134, presents the most detailed exposition of this position ever offered. Munck differs from Hirsch at one key point. He thinks that the opponents were indigenous to Galatia and were in fact Paul's own converts, whereas Hirsch thought they had come from Antioch and had been circumcised in connection with the struggle between Peter and Paul recorded in Gal. 2.11ff. Munck's view is highly improbable because the troublemakers were apparently from outside the churches of Galatia. Whenever Paul speaks of those who were disturbing the Galatians, he shifts from the second person used in addressing the Galatians to the third person (cf. 1.7, 9; 3.1; 4.17; 5.7, 10, 12). This clearly indicates that the troublemakers were interlopers. Others accepting that the Judaizers were Gentile Christians include W. Michaelis, "Judaistische Heidenchristen," ZNW, 30 (1931), pp. 83-89; Schoeps, Paul, pp. 64-65; A.E. Harvey, "The Opposition to Paul," Studia Evangelica 4, Texte und Untersuchungen 102 (1968), pp. 318-332; M. Barth, "Jews and Gentiles: the Social Character of Justification in Paul," Journal of Ecumenical Studies 5 (1968), p. 251, n. 15; and Richardson, Israel in the Church, pp. 84-97.

<sup>2</sup>O. Holtzmann, "Zu Emanuel Hirsch, Zwei Fragen zu Galates 6," ZNW 30 (1931), p. 6 first recognizes this. See also R. Jewett, "The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation," NTS 17 (1970-71), pp. 202-203. The use of the participle περιτεμνόμενοι in 5.3 is not determinative for 6.13.

<sup>3</sup>See supra note 1.

<sup>4</sup>Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 222.



understands it as a customary present: "οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι sind 'die im Zustand der Beschneidung Befindlichen' oder 'die die Beschneidung üben,' ohne Reflexion darüber, dass die Gegner selbst schon beschnitten sind."<sup>1</sup> Our own view is that περιτεμνόμενοι is middle and should be translated "those who are circumcisors." The choice of the middle participle was to emphasize that the Jewish Christian circumcisors had more than a passing interest in circumcising Gentile Christians. It was not only part of their scheme to avoid persecution (6.12b), but it also enabled them to "boast in the flesh" of those they circumcised (6.13b).

In the end, one participle, capable of several interpretations, constitutes a slender hook on which to hang a whole theory. In the case of περιτεμνόμενοι this is especially the case. It is technically no more correct of Gentiles circumcised as adults than it is of Jews circumcised as infants. For this reason, it is better to assume that Paul's opponents in Galatia were Jewish Christian Judaizers.

### C. The Composition and Argument of Galatians

#### 1. The Composition of Galatians

According to H.D. Betz

In a recent essay, H.D. Betz has offered some important suggestions pertaining to the overall composition and argument of Galatians. He maintains that Galatians represents "an example of the apologetic letter genre" of the Graeco-Roman world.<sup>2</sup> Since no apologetic letters contemporary with Paul are extant, Betz relies on well-known treatises regarding the art of oral defenses from the period in order to obtain his model of what an apologetic letter would contain. By this procedure he purports to show that most of the generally accepted structural units in Galatians correspond to specific elements prescribed for rhetorical apologies. According to his analysis, 1.6-11 conforms to an exordium in which

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<sup>1</sup>Schlier, Galater, p. 281. Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 412, n. 23.

<sup>2</sup>H.D. Betz, "The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," NTS 21 (1974-75), pp. 353-379.

a summary of the case is presented, albeit in a biased way.<sup>1</sup> The following main section, 1.12-2.14, constitutes a narratio in which a "statement of facts" is presented in chronological order.<sup>2</sup> 2.15-21 corresponds to a propositio. According to Betz, this element serves "to sum up the narratio's material content" and "sets up the arguments to be discussed later in the probatio."<sup>3</sup> The probatio extends from 3.1-4.31 and represents the proof section of the epistle in which Paul attempts to prove his case against his opponents through a variety of argumentative techniques.<sup>4</sup> The final major section is the paraenesis of 5.1-6.10. Because the rhetorical apology of Galatians is embodied in a letter, it is enclosed within the normal epistolary framework of a prescript (1.1-5) and a letter conclusion (6.11-18). The letter conclusion of Galatians, however, functions as a rhetorical peroratio, a recapitulation of the case and an emotional appeal for an affirmative decision.<sup>5</sup> In a rhetorical apology each section was intended to perform particular functions in the total attempt to persuade the audience of the truth of the defence's case, and according to Betz, this is true of Paul's letter to the Galatians.<sup>6</sup>

Betz has made a significant contribution towards understanding the literary character of Galatians by offering an explanation concerning the relationship between a number of the structural units of Galatians and their function in the overall purposes of the letter. His analysis of Galatians helps to free Paul from the charge common since the days of Adolf Deissmann that the apostle was a rambling, discursive letter writer. In view of the rhetorical apologetic tradition of antiquity, Paul's letter to the Galatians represents a well-argued case. Having said, this, however, several reservations must be noted. In the first place, other scholars have

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 359-362.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 362-367.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 367-368.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 368-375.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 356-359.

<sup>6</sup>The relationship of Galatians to rhetorical apologies extends beyond the basic structure of the argument to include a variety of specific elements within the argument. E.g. 3.6-18 corresponds to exempla which were given a certain level of value in persuasion, and 4.12-20 constitutes a friendship topos which carried a limited amount of inherent authority.



recognized the interrelation of most of the features of Galatians without being able to give an exact literary explanation. Thus Betz has not revolutionized our understanding of Galatians, rather he has provided an explanation for the phenomena others have observed. It is inaccurate to describe Galatians as "an example of the 'apologetic letter' genre," as he does, simply because no other examples of this genre are extant, or even known of indirectly. By Betz's own analysis, Galatians has features characteristic of rhetorical apologies, philosophical letters (the paraenesis), and magical letters. This suggests that Paul was not bound by a particular literary form or genre, but used various accepted techniques in arguing his case.

The most questionable feature of Betz's work pertains to his discussion of the function of the letter. He argues that rhetoric is the "art of persuasion" which "has little in common with the 'truth' but it is the exercise of those skills which make people believe something to be true."<sup>1</sup> He then urges with respect to Paul:

Having to use this rather suspect form of logical argumentation becomes even more questionable when one realizes that no kind of rational argument can possibly defend the position Paul must defend. In effect, his defence amounts to a defence of the  $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  which was given to the gentile Galatians outside of the Torah. How can an irrational experience like the ecstatic experience of the divine Spirit be defended as legitimate if the means of such a defence are limited to those available to the 'apologetic letter'?<sup>2</sup>

Betz has failed apparently to appreciate the actual argument of Galatians as opposed to the form of the argument, and he neglects to see the relevance of a point, which he himself makes regarding supernatural authority. Paul directs his argumentation in Galatians to refuting the rational arguments presented against his Gospel by his Judaizing opponents.<sup>3</sup> Betz seems to think that rhetorical argument itself is morally suspect, but in this he ignores the real essence of rhetoric. Rhetoric begins with observations about

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<sup>1</sup> Betz, "Literary Composition," p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 27-28 and Professor Barrett, "The Allegory of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar in the Argument of Galatians," Rechtfertigung (1976), pp. 6ff.



the way in which the human mind responds to intense argumentation and then suggests the ways in which argumentation may be presented most effectively. Is Betz's article to be counted suspect simply because he uses the conventions of modern scholarly argumentation to convince his readers of the truth of his position? In the hands of someone like the apostle Paul, who was convinced of the truth of his position and that the truth of his position would convince his readers, the structure of rhetorical apologies merely provided a useful framework in which the truth might be argued. If Paul's presuppositions about the Gospel and the nature of salvation are accepted, there is nothing irrational or fundamentally dishonest about the form of argument utilized by him in Galatians. Paul's defense in Galatians is not just "a defence of the  $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\mu\alpha$  which was given outside the Torah." Paul's defense involves historical considerations about the authenticity of his Gospel (1.12-2.14), the logic of Jewish-Christians demanding obedience to the law when they acknowledge that they too are saved by faith in Christ (2.15-21), the priority of the promises to Abraham and the blessings of the Gentiles in the seed of Abraham apart from the law (3.6-25) and so on. Betz is also incorrect in assuming that the experience of the Spirit was "irrational" for Paul or the Galatians in the sense that it is "irrational" for "twentieth century man." It is clear from 1 Cor. 12 that for Paul the Spirit manifested himself in observable ways. This understanding is reflected in Gal. 3.1-5. If what Betz says concerning the supreme value of evidence of supernatural origin is correct,<sup>1</sup> then the presence of the divine Spirit among the Galatians (3.1-5) need not be defended at all. It is, instead, one of the strongest evidences for the truth of Paul's case, at least by the standards of his own day.

## 2. The Argument of Galatians

Since we are interested in determining how Paul employs the believer sonship theme in the argument of Galatians as part of our endeavor to understand its significance for him, it is necessary to present the general thrust of the letter's argument before turning to the specific argument in chapters 3 and

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<sup>1</sup>Betz, "Literary Composition," p. 370.



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Paul begins the letter to the Galatians with an almost polemical salutation in 1.1-5. He stresses from the very first words of the letter the divine source of his apostleship and the origin of salvation in Christ Jesus. Among the letters of Paul, Galatians has the distinction of being the only one not to have an introductory thanksgiving. Instead, the apostle comes straight to the point: "I am amazed that you are turning away so quickly from him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel which is not another" (1.6b-7). Then in vss. 8-9 Paul invokes a curse on anyone preaching a message contrary to the one which he preached to the Galatians.

The first main section of the epistle stretches from 1.11 to 2.14 (possibly 2.21). The material is essentially historical and autobiographical, but the precise reason that Paul presents the sketch is not so clear. The emphasis on his Gospel, its origin (1.11ff.) and validity (2.1-10), suggests that he felt compelled to defend it from some form of attack by his opponents. It is improbable that Paul was actually accused of dependence upon the Jerusalem apostles (and perhaps others as well) for his Gospel.<sup>1</sup> The Judaizers themselves probably appealed to Jerusalem for authority and may have claimed that Paul had deviated from preaching the original Gospel which he had received from the Jerusalem apostles. Paul's response in Gal. 1.11-2.14 was probably intended to undercut his opponents' claims by demonstrating that he had never been dependent upon Jerusalem (1.11-24) and that the Jerusalem leaders had accepted his Gospel without reservation when he presented it to them (2.1-10).<sup>2</sup> The details of the argument need not concern us because they do not bear directly on the argument where believer sonship comes

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<sup>1</sup>For this view see Duncan, Galatians, pp. 28f. and Burton, Galatians, pp. 38ff. In relation to 1.6-9, 1.11-12 asserts the divine origin of Paul's Gospel justifying the curse against anyone presenting an alternative gospel.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. G. Bornkamm, Paul, pp. 18-19; Bruce, "The Other' Gospel," pp. 261f.; and Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 62ff. Betz, "Literary Composition," pp. 363-364 thinks that 1.11f. represents a denial by Paul, but it is more likely that vss. 11-12 counter the claim of the Judaizers that their gospel is based on the true primitive tradition. Paul, in effect, declares that his Gospel is divine in origin "through a revelation of Jesus Christ." Schütz, Paul, pp. 131-158 maintains that Paul sought in Gal. 1 and 2 "to provide a rationale for apostolic authority in the absence of a concept of apostolic



into play.

The narrative section ends in 2.11-14. According to these verses, when Peter came to Antioch, he had table fellowship with Gentiles (presumably Christians). But when some men came from James, Peter withdrew fearing those of the circumcision. The rest of the Jewish Christians and even Barnabas followed him. Paul thus felt bound to oppose Peter to his face by asking him how he could force Gentiles to live like Jews when he lived like a Gentile. This sets the stage for 2.15-21 where Paul makes the transition from the historically oriented polemic to his main theological polemic. It is possible that 2.15-21, or part of it, derives from Paul's actual confrontation with Peter at Antioch.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless its relevance to the situation in Galatia is obvious since Paul introduces the themes of "works of the law," "faith in Christ," and "justification" which recur throughout the argument in chapter 3 (cf. also 5.2ff.).<sup>2</sup> Several issues are raised by vss. 15-21, but three are of fundamental significance. In vss. 15-16 Paul reminds his readers that even Jews, who are not sinners like the Gentiles, become acceptable before God (this is what justification refers to) on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ and not works of the law. In vss. 19-20 Paul acknowledges that he has died to the law through the law in order to live to God. The life he lives is not lived with Christ. And in vs. 21 he reasons that if righteousness comes through the law then Christ died to no purpose.

The section beginning at Gal. 3.1 and continuing to 5.1 represents both the central portion of the epistle and its main theological argument. It is within this section that Paul introduces his discussion of believer sonship (3.26-4.7). We will return to this section in a moment since it requires a somewhat more detailed discussion than the rest of the letter.

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legitimacy which is sufficiently well developed to include within itself an implicit appeal to authority" (pp. 156-157). Schütz's work is very interesting, but one wonders if he has not read too much into Gal. 1 and 2, far more at any rate than the Galatians themselves could have comprehended. Although the two cannot be separated, the real issue in Gal. 1.11-2.10 concerns the origin and validity of the Gospel preached by Paul rather than his personal apostolic authority as such.

<sup>1</sup> See the references in n. 4, p. 172 supra.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Burton, Galatians, p. 117; Oepke, Galater, p. 87; Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 145-146; Kummel, "'Individualgeschichte,'" pp. 161-163.



Gal. 5.2 to 6.10 constitutes an exhortative section. The first paragraph, 5.2-12, concerns the Galatians' possible defection to the Judaizers. Vss. 2-6, in particular, draw practical conclusions from the theological argument, while vss. 7-12 deal with Paul's personal reaction to the Galatians' situation and those troubling them. In vss. 13-26 Paul either anticipates or counters the charge that his Gospel of freedom from the law leads to anti-nomianism by spelling out what is and is not Christian behavior. The paraenesis continues in 6.1-10 and as in 5.13-14, 26 the theme of Christians' behavior towards one another is emphasized. The passage 6.11-17 offers a final attack on the circumcision party troubling the Galatians before Paul concludes the letter in vs. 18.

Having given this brief outline of the basic features of the letter, we must now turn to the central argument of the letter as found in chapters 3 and 4 in order to determine what role 3.26-4.7 plays in it.

### 3. The Argument of Gal. 3.1ff.

The key to understanding the basic lines of argument in Gal. 3 and 4 is the historical situation addressed by Paul.<sup>1</sup> In a previous section, we determined that the fundamental problem confronting Paul was the presence and the agitation fomented by Judaizing interlopers who sought to compel the Galatians to be circumcised (6.12) and to come under the law (4.21). The phrase τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζειν Ἰουδαΐζειν in 2.14 probably embodies the essence of the Judaizer's position. The frequency and significance of Paul's references to Abraham and matters related to Abraham in chapters 3 and 4 and the interaction with the theme of the law suggest that these things played a crucial role in the Judaizers' "different gospel" (1.6).<sup>2</sup> The theological arguments of Gal. 3 and

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<sup>1</sup>Schmithals, Die Gnostikers, p. 29 denies this. In agreement with our view see Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, pp. 99-102; Burton, Galatians, p. 142; and Professor Barrett, "Allegory," p. 6. When insufficient account is taken of the historical situation it can easily lead to a misrepresentation of the argument. Thus Sanders, Paul, p. 493 oversimplifies the argument of Galatians 3 by assuming that Paul is only concerned with the theme "works of the law."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, First Adam, pp. 33-34 and Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, pp. 102-130. Drane, Paul, p. 24 maintains that the basic issue in 3.6-4.7 is sonship to Abraham and through him to God, while in 4.21-6.10 the law and circumcision are at the center of the discussion. This is not totally accurate because



4 are thus, in all probability, intended to counter the theological claims of Paul's opponents. At the same time, Paul seeks to maintain the complete and exclusive legitimacy of the Galatians' religious experience in Jesus Christ. In order to accomplish his aims, Paul presents a series of connected arguments directed towards the Galatians' religious experience and against the unacceptable claims of his opponents.

In Gal. 3.1-5 Paul asserts the indisputable authenticity of the Galatians' initial religious experience in Christ. He also presents the fundamental issues at stake with the Galatians, at least from his perspective. The opening verse of chapter three is connected logically with 2.21 since both refer to the death of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Paul feared for the Galatians because they were being bewitched, without recognizing it,<sup>2</sup> into rendering the death of Jesus meaningless through acceptance of the arguments of the Judaizers. They apparently did not realize that acceptance of the Judaizers' preaching and of circumcision would make Christ of no more value to them (cf. 5.2) and would annul the grace of God for them (cf. 2.21). In vs. 2 Paul poses a crucial rhetorical question: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?"<sup>3</sup> The answer to this question was of decisive significance for Paul's position, and there could be no doubt of the answer required from the Galatians: they had received the Spirit from hearing the Gospel

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the law plays a major role in 3.6-4.7, and 5.13-6.10 is general paraenesis which only concerns the law in an indirect way by showing that Paul is not an antinomian in an ethical sense. Cf. also Jewett, "Agitators," p. 200 who declares, "In the light of the fact that Paul devotes a main portion of his argument to the question about the true sons of Abraham, it is likely that the agitators argued for circumcision on the grounds that the entrance into the elect spiritual community demanded prior admission into Abraham's covenant through circumcision.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup>This is the connotation of the verb βαρκαίνειν. See G. Delling, "βαρκαίνω," TDNT 1, p. 595.

<sup>3</sup>The words "ἔργα νόμου πίστεως" (cf. vs. 5) are capable of several different renderings. See Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, p. 74. The intended contrast between ἔργα νόμου and ἔργα πίστεως favors the active idea of "believing" for πίστεως (cf. Rom. 10.17).



and believing in Jesus Christ (cf. vs. 5). This had occurred before the question of "works of the law" was ever raised.<sup>1</sup>

Vs. 3 contains two more rhetorical questions from Paul. As if to underscore the importance of the second question, he prefaces it with the words, "Are you so foolish?" Paul was concerned that the Galatians were unaware of the implications of their Christian experience, and thus he asks, "Having begun in the Spirit, are you now finishing in the flesh?"<sup>2</sup> The genuineness of the Galatians' initial Christian life was confirmed by their objective experience of the Spirit in the works of power which they experienced (cf. vs. 5). In a similar way, the experience of circumcision would have established them as living by "works of the law." Thus Mussner observes,

πνεῦμα und σὰρξ bilden hier also die einander ausschliessenden Gegensätze; mit den beiden Dativen sind verschiedene Bestimmungsweisen der religiösen Existenz gekennzeichnet.<sup>3</sup>

The intent of vs. 3 is further clarified by the rhetorical question in vs. 4: τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῇ? Because there is nothing in the letter to suggest that the Galatians had suffered as a result of their faith, πᾶσχειν is best rendered as "experience." The τοσαῦτα then refers to the works of the Spirit which would have become useless if they tried to finish by the flesh. The culmination of Paul's emphasis on the experience of the Galatians comes in vs. 5. The present participles ἐπιχορηγῶν and ἐνεργῶν imply that the Galatians were still experiencing the gift of the Spirit and God's powerful working through the Spirit. Since they continued to experience the

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<sup>1</sup>The primary "work of the law" in Paul's mind is circumcision. This becomes clear in 5.3 when Paul reminds them that circumcision obligates one to the whole law.

<sup>2</sup>The normal temporal sense of ἐνάρξασθαι suggests that ἐπιτελεῖσθαι should be taken as a present middle with the active meaning "to finish" according to G. Delling, "τέλος κτλ.," TDNT 8, p. 62. Cf. Burton, Galatians, p. 149. "Flesh" is a loaded word in vs. 3 because the Judaizers were urging the Galatians to accept the fleshly mark of circumcision as a completion of their initial faith.

<sup>3</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 209. Cf. Jewett, Anthropological Terms, pp. 99-100 on Gal. 3.2-3. Jewett's analysis of a three-staged development in Galatians of Paul's understanding of the categories of flesh and spirit is not altogether convincing.



Spirit and the powerful working of God even though they had not accepted circumcision, a work of the law, these things must have come by faith.<sup>1</sup>

Paul accomplishes the transition from his appeal to the experience of the Galatians to his theological polemic against the views of the Judaizers by introducing the quotation of Gen. 15.6 into Gal. 3.6. The frequent references to Abraham, and who his descendants were, played an important role in the Judaizers' propaganda.<sup>2</sup> The question of vs. 5 expected the answer "by hearing with faith." Lagrange thinks that the *καθώς* of vs. 6 should be taken to mean, "c'est de la même façon que . . ."<sup>3</sup> In other words, the faith of the Galatians which led to their experience of the Spirit was of the same sort that Abraham had when he believed in God, and it was credited to him for righteousness. Paul is not interested in the meaning of Gen. 15.6 at this point, as he is in Rom. 4.3ff.; he is concerned solely with Abraham's experience of salvation through his believing in God. On the basis of Gen. 15.6, Paul draws the conclusion (*ἀρα*) that sonship to Abraham is based on faith, not on circumcision, nor on physical descent.<sup>4</sup> Later in the chapter (vss. 16 and 29) he attempts to prove that Gentiles are the children of Abraham in a spiritual sense through Christ. In vss. 8-9 Paul proceeds to show that Gentiles have a share in Abraham apart from circumcision and works of the law. His initial evidence for this comes in the form of a mixed quotation from Gen. 12.3b (LXX)

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. R. Bring, Commentary on Galatians (1961), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Similarly Drane, Paul, pp. 24ff.; Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, pp. 75-76; and Burton, Galatians, pp. 156-159. Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 217.

<sup>3</sup>Lagrange, Galates, p. 62. See also Burton, Galatians, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 219 observes with perception: "Die Spiritualisierung des Ausdrucks 'Söhne Abrahams' war ohne weiteres möglich, weil schon im AT der Terminus 'Sohn' nicht nur im physischen Sinn verstanden wurde; es kann sogar ein Schülerverhältnis als ein Sohnesverhältnis genommen werden, vor allem in der Anrede 'mein Sohn'. . . . In den Ausdrücken wie 'Söhne des Lichtes,' 'Söhne der Finsternis' usw. bedeutet die Sohnschaft Zugehörigkeit zu einem bestimmten geistigen Bereich. So war es auch möglich, 'die aus Glauben' als 'Söhne Abrahams' in einem spirituellen Sinn zu bezeichnen."



and 18.18b (LXX) (cf. Acts 3.25).<sup>1</sup> The unique introductory formula to the quotation of the Old Testament in vs. 8 has considerable significance for Paul's argument. When Scripture announced beforehand the blessing of the Gentiles in Abraham, it did so because God already intended to justify the Gentiles through faith. This enables Paul to conclude in vs. 9 that those who believe are blessed with the believing Abraham. He does not limit vs. 9 to the Gentiles because even Jews are only blessed on the basis of faith (cf. 2.16) in the same way that Abraham was.

The precise line of reasoning in vss. 10-14 is difficult to follow as the diverse expositions of modern commentators indicate. Vs. 10 itself, however, contrasts with vs. 9. Unlike the blessing of those who believe (vs. 9), those who live by "works of the law" live under a curse (vs. 10a). This is the first time that Paul has indicated the negative effect of living by works of the law. The Galatians had to see themselves as potentially among the ὅσοι of vs. 10 if they chose to live by works of the law. The authoritative basis for the assertion of vs. 10a is the Scriptural citation of Deut. 27.26 in vs. 10b. The alteration of Deut. 27.26 by Paul provides the clue for the way in which the Old Testament citation confirmed his statement in vs. 10a.<sup>2</sup> In the LXX, after ἐμμένει, the text reads, "ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ νόμου τούτου." Paul, on the other hand modifies it to say, "πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου."<sup>3</sup> Paul's modification of Deut. 27.26 interprets the statement as referring to the whole Torah; therefore, it includes the Abrahamic narratives of Genesis. The full significance of the

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<sup>1</sup>On the mixed quotation, see the remarks of M. Wilcox, "Upon the Tree'--- Deut. 21:22-23," JBL 96 (1977), pp. 95-96.

<sup>2</sup>The normal view regarding Paul's citation of Deut. 27.26 assumes that Paul merely presupposed the impossibility of fulfilling the law. Cf. J. Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians (1854), p. 89; Burton, Galatians, p. 164; Oepke, Galater, p. 105; and Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, p. 77. But such an assumption would seem to require proof in a polemical situation like Galatians.

<sup>3</sup>These words actually occur in Deut. 29.19-20 (LXX) and 30.10, but in both cases the expression is followed by τούτου. Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 223-224 is the only one we have found who sees the significance of Paul's alteration as applying the curse to the whole Torah.



quotation of Gen. 15.6 in Gal. 3.6 now becomes clear. Paul views Gen. 15.6 as a decisive declaration from the Torah. It announces the principle that acceptability with God is based on faith. Vs. 11 forecloses on the possibility of justification through works of law, and vs. 12 makes the reason clear: the law is not by faith. Thus those who live by works of the law are under a curse because they try to make acceptability with God rest on their nomism, rather than by abiding by the principle of faith laid down in Gen. 15.6.<sup>1</sup>

Vss. 13 and 14 are not incidental to Paul's argument for they provide a strong argument against any who are tempted to live by works of the law. In vs. 13 Paul returns to the theme of the curse of the law found in vs. 10. Although in vs. 10 Paul refers to "all those who live by works of the law," an obvious allusion to Jews, as well as any Gentile Christians who may be tempted to live by works of the law, in vs. 13 the ἡμῶν implies that Christ died to redeem all Christians from the curse of the law. The way in which this was true for Jewish Christians is clear, but it is not so apparent in the case of Gentile Christians. Perhaps the redemption mentioned in vs. 13 is proleptic for Gentile Christians with Christ dying under the curse of the law to keep them from ever coming under the curse of the law through trying to live by works of the law. More probably, Paul thought that Gentiles were in principle under the curse of the law in respect to Deut. 27.26 because they did not "remain in all which was written in the book of the law." However this may be, Paul believed in the redemptive death of Christ for all Christians. If the Galatians attempted to gain their acceptance before God by works of the law, they then would pass under the curse of the law in the sense of 10a, the very curse from which Christ redeemed the Jewish people.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. 9.31-32 to some extent helps confirm our interpretation of Gal. 3.10b since Paul says: "Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, did not come up to the law. Why? Because they did not pursue the law by faith but by works," Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, pp. 507-510 on the interpretation of Rom. 9.31-32.

<sup>2</sup> On the significance of the use of Deut. 21.23 here see Y. Yadin, "Peshar Nahum (4Qp Nahum) Reconsidered," Israel Exploration Journal 21 (1971), pp. 1-12 and M. Wilcox, "'Upon the Tree,'" pp. 88-90. On the theme of the substitutionary character of Gal. 3.13 see Berger, "Abraham," pp. 52-53; Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 233; and Ridderbos, Paul, p. 190.



The two ἵνα clauses of vs. 14 depend on the whole thought of vs. 13. The first of these, claims that the redemptive death of Christ had the goal of bringing the blessing of Abraham to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus. This is a positive statement directed against the implied conception that the blessings of Abraham were to come to the Gentiles through their acceptance of the law and obedience to it. The blessing promised for the Gentiles comes in Christ Jesus through their faith in him; so then the emphatically placed "in Christ Jesus" of vs. 14 supplies the missing object of faith from vss. 8 and 9. This point becomes clear in the second purpose clause which defines the εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραάμ in the first purpose clause. As K. Berger has seen, "In V. 14b wird also der "Segen" Abraham näherhin interpretiert als eine Verheissung, die Abraham gegeben wurde, deren Inhalt das Pneuma ist."<sup>1</sup> The first person plural verb, λάβωμεν, indicates that both Jews and Gentiles were recipients of the promised Spirit, and the emphatic διὰ τῆς πίστεως makes it clear that this gift comes through faith, faith which has Jesus Christ for its object. By this step in his reasoning, Paul "proves" that the Galatians had already experienced the blessing connected with Abraham because they unquestionably had experienced the Spirit.

The nature of Paul's argument shifts in 3.15-29, though the idea of the ἐπαγγελία is taken up from vs. 14. Whereas the argument of 3.6-14 was carried forward by a series of Scriptural quotations, the words κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω signal a change in the argument to one based on human analogy.<sup>2</sup> Paul wishes to prove the priority of the promises connected with Abraham, which are received by faith (vss. 6-14), over the law. To accomplish this he takes an illustration from the human sphere (vs. 15) and applies it to the divine sphere (vs. 17), thus presenting an argument aminori ad majus. The debate

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<sup>1</sup>Berger, "Abraham," p. 53. Cf. also Schlier, Galater, pp. 140-141 and Duncan, Galatians, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup>The formula "I speak according to men" appears to be a technical expression similar to two Jewish ones:  $\text{כְּבָרִיתִי בְּלִבִּי}$  and  $\text{כְּבָרִיתִי בְּלִבִּי}$ . See the discussions of C.J. Bjerkeland, "'Nach menschlicher Weise' rede ich." Funktion und Sinn des paulinischen Ausdruck," ST 26 (1972), pp. 63-100 and D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (1956), pp. 394-400, though his explanation is less convincing than Bjerkeland's.



surrounding Paul's use of the term διαθήκη in vss. 15 and 17 need not concern us here.<sup>1</sup> The context and the surrounding technical terms favor the idea of testament. Although διαθήκη properly means covenant in the Genesis narrative regarding Abraham, the essentially one-sided nature of the promises made by God (cf. Gen. 15.18; 17.1-10) allowed Paul to interpret it in its normal sense of testament. Thus in Paul's view, God bestowed on Abraham and his descendants a testamentary largess in the form of the promises. The argument of vss. 15-17 runs as follows:

No one can set aside or add a codicil to a will which is already validated. The promises were spoken by God to Abraham and his seed so a valid, irrevocable will is in existence. This will has temporal and qualitative priority over the law which only came 430 years after the enactment of the will by God. For this reason the will made by God in favor of Abraham cannot be invalidated, setting aside the promise, on the basis of the law.<sup>2</sup>

Vs. 16b parenthetically adds a very important point for the later discussion. The promises were to Abraham and his seed; Paul interprets the singular σπέρμα as referring to Christ. Paul probably did this because he found the real fulfillment of Gen. 22.18 in one person, Christ Jesus.<sup>3</sup>

Vs. 18 moves the argument of vss. 15-17 a step further. The κληρονομία of vs. 18 logically refers to the content of the testament made by God. If the inheritance to Abraham and his seed were granted on the basis of law, then it would no longer rest

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<sup>1</sup>For various explanations of the term διαθήκη as meaning "testament" see Lagrange, Galates, pp. 174-175; P. Bonnard, L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Galates (1953), pp. 70-71; Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 236-237; and E. Bammel, "Gottes ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ (Gal. iii.15-17) und das jüdische Rechtsdenken," NTS 6 (1959-60), pp. 313-319. In favor of the meaning covenant see Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 141; Burton, Galatians, pp. 178-179, 182-183, 501-504 and Duncan, Galatians, pp. 105-106. J.D. Hester, Paul's Concept of Inheritance (1968), pp. 74-75 tries to combine the two ideas.

<sup>2</sup>Bammel, "Rechtsdenken," pp. 313-319 offers an interesting explanation of vss. 15-17 through the Jewish legal practice of קנין חזק which enabled a testator to transfer possession of the inheritance while retaining the right of usufruct.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Dahl, "Atonement," pp. 23-24 and Wilcox, "'Upon the Tree,'" pp. 96-99 who think that Gal. 3.14a is derived from Gen. 22.18 with "in Christ Jesus" replacing "in your Seed." This latter phrase is then explicated in Gal. 3.16 to mean Christ.



on the promise of God. But since God has given to Abraham through promise, then the law cannot effect the means of receiving the inheritance for this would overthrow the original and irrevocable testament made by God.

The preceding discussion of the priority of the promises to Abraham over the law, leads Paul to a fundamental question in vs. 19a: "why then the law?" In answering the "why" of the law in vss. 19b-25, the apostle places it in the salvation historical context of its origin, purpose, and temporal limitation. The discussion is not theoretical, however, because it has immediate relevance for the way in which the Galatians should understand the law. The law according to vs. 19, was added on account of transgressions (cf. Rom. 4.15; 5.13) but even with its giving, its limitation was set as the coming of the seed to whom the promise had been made. Vss. 19d and 20 have been the subject of much debate. Without entering into the debate, we may simply observe that these verses were apparently intended to depreciate the significance of the law in the salvation purposes of God.<sup>1</sup> The restrictions Paul places on the time and function of the law in vs. 19bc confirms this, as does the question posed in vs. 21 and its answer which indicates Paul was aware of the possible radical conclusions which might be drawn from his somewhat disparaging remarks in vss. 19c-20.

According to vs. 21 the law is incapable of giving life and so righteousness does not come from the law (cf. 2.21), and in vs. 22 Paul points to the plight of "τὰ πάντα": "All things are confined together by Scripture under sin in order that the promise of life and righteousness might be by faith in Christ Jesus to those who believe." The conception set forth here that Scripture confines all men under sin is comparable to what Paul says in some detail in Rom. 3.9-20 (cf. Rom. 11.32).<sup>2</sup> In vss. 23-25 Paul places faith and

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<sup>1</sup>The views of Klein, "Individualgeschichte und Weltgeschichte," pp. 209-214; Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 268; and Oepke, Galater, pp. 114-117, who find gnostizing dualism present in vss. 19-20, are to be rejected. Paul's belief in the God-assigned function to the law (Gal. 3.19b and 23-24) refutes the views of Klein, Bultmann, Oepke, and others that Paul conceived the law to be a hostile power. Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 245-250.

<sup>2</sup>For good discussions of vss. 21-22 see ibid., pp. 250-254 and Schlier, Galater, pp. 163-166. Burton, Galatians, pp. 195-196 restricts the reference to "the Scripture" in vs. 22 to Deut. 27.26, but this is probably too specific for what Paul has in mind.



law in tension. The law had a restrictive function similar to a παιδαγωγός who does not really educate his charges but oversees their behavior until they come of age. As Schlier observes regarding the παιδαγωγός: "Zu seinen Erziehungsmethoden gehörten reichliche Tadel und Zuchtigung."<sup>1</sup> But the law only served this function until faith in Christ became possible. When it became possible those under the tutelage of the law were released. The implication for the Galatians could hardly be clearer. The law has been replaced by the principle of faith with the coming of Christ in order that the salvation blessing of justification might be by faith.

Having followed the argument of Galatians to 3.25, we may now enter into a discussion of Gal. 3.26-4.7 where Paul introduces the theme of believer sonship into the argument. With the argument of Galatians in mind, it should be possible to avoid distorting what Paul actually says regarding believers as sons of God.

#### D. The Theme of Believer

##### Sonship in Gal. 3.26-29

The whole line of argument in Gal. 3.6-25 comes to a conclusion in 3.26-29 as Paul attempts to tie down the Galatians' already existing claim to the promises of Abraham. The weight of the conclusion falls squarely on vs. 29 where Paul asserts: "If you are of Christ, then you are the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise."<sup>2</sup> The figure of Abraham plays a decisive role

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<sup>1</sup>Schlier, Galater, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup>Viewing Gal. 3.26-29 as the conclusion to the argument in 3.6-25 entails a difficulty: what is the relationship of Gal. 4.1-7 to what precedes it? The problem of the relationship of 3.26-29 and 4.1-7 has been answered in several different ways. Drane, Paul, pp. 35-36 suggests that in 3.25-29 Paul draws the theological conclusion, while in 4.1-7 he draws the historical conclusion to the section. Lagrange, Galates, pp. 91, 94 thinks that 3.25-29 forms the "conclusion principale (de III, 15-29)," and that in 4.1-7 Paul returns to the relation of promise (= testament) and law (= pedagogue) in the life of the believer through fusing "les deux metaphores" of 3.15-25. J.D. Hester, "The 'Heir' and Heilsgeschichte: A Study of Galatians 4:1ff.," Oikonomia: Heilsgeschichte als Thema der Theologie (1967), p. 118 maintains that 4.1-7 forms the "climax" of the argument from 3.15ff. and that any division between 3.29 and 4.1 distorts Paul's thought. Sanders, Paul, p. 504 (cf. p. 457) claims 3.25-29 represents the "clinching, concluding argument" of chapter 3 and that 4.1ff. merely continue the theme of sonship and slavery. Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, p. 86 concludes that



throughout 3.6-29 because he is the prototype of the Christian believer (cf. 3.8-9) and because he is the source of salvation blessings for those who believe, including the Gentiles (cf. 3.14). But the discussion of 3.6-25 left Paul with a major problem. He had not yet proven that the Gentile Galatians had legitimately inherited the promises made to Abraham and his seed (cf. 3.16) apart from circumcision as a sign of entrance into the Abrahamic line. Paul had anticipated the solution in 3.7 by claiming those who believe are sons of Abraham. In vss. 26-29 he attempts to demonstrate to the Galatians that they are already legitimate heirs of Abraham. This is why Paul shifts to the second person in 3.26-29. He calls upon the experience and "theological knowledge" of the Galatians to establish his argument.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. The Reasons for the Introduction of Believer Sonship in Gal. 3.26

In order to accomplish his theological goal in Gal. 3, Paul introduces the theme of believer sonship in vs. 26. The very fact that he does so and the way in which he does it are important for a proper understanding of believer sonship in Paul. Gal. 3.26 asserts

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Paul draws "die Summe aus seinen bisherigen Erörterungen" in 3.26-29. Vs. 29 is "das Ergebnis der Erörterungen für den Galater" (p. 88), and 4.1-11 is a "kurzen Abriss der Heilsgeschichte" with special attention to the heathen past of the Galatians (p. 88). Those who see a break between 3.29 and 4.1 with 3.26-29 forming a conclusion to the thought progression of chapter 3 are correct because Gal. 4.1ff. obviously does take up the Galatians situation in a more direct way than the discussion in 3.6-29. In 4.1-11 Paul speaks of the problem of enslavement both past and potentially present. This discussion has connections with a number of ideas in ch. 3, but at the same time, it constitutes an independent argument which can stand on its own without chapter 3.

<sup>1</sup>Previously in vss. 1-5, 7, 15 of chapter 3, Paul had addressed the Galatians directly. Apart from these verses Paul had used either the third person (cf. 3.8-12 and 15b-22) or the first person plural (cf. 3.13-14, 23-25). In the case of vss. 7 and 15a the direct address of the Galatians has no bearing on the argument. In 3.1-5 Paul had argued from the experience of the Galatians in proving the priority of faith over works of the law. The reintroduction of the direct address of the Galatians in 3.26-29 appears to have the same significance as it had in 3.1-5 for the nature of the argument.

that the Galatians are sons of God. The question is: why is believer sonship inserted into the discussion at this point and what significance does it have for the argument? The complete answer to the second part of this question can only come when the thought of vss. 26-29 is unpacked. The first part is more immediately answerable. Many have noted that the image of the παιδαγωγός in 3.24-25 prepares the way for the introduction of the sonship theme in 3.26.<sup>1</sup> The παιδαγωγός was responsible for a υἱπίος or παῖς, but when the child was old enough to be responsible for himself the pedagogue was no longer needed. Mussner thus observes with respect to vs. 26: "Den Ausdruck 'Söhne' gebraucht also der Apostel deutlich im Sinn von erwachsenen, freien Söhnen und also als Gegensatz zu den υἱπίοι und Sklaven."<sup>2</sup> There is a problem in assuming that the image of the law as a pedagogue (vss. 24-25) directly prepares for the divine sonship theme in vs. 26. It is unclear to what extent Paul intended the Galatians to see themselves in vss. 23-25 and in fact to what extent they would have seen themselves in those verses.<sup>3</sup> The image of the pedagogue may prepare conceptually for the sonship theme,<sup>4</sup> but it does not account for the divine sonship of the Galatians being introduced. But quite apart from this problem, the previous discussion in ch. 3 in no way prepares us for the description of the Galatians as "sons of God" in vs. 26. On the basis of the preceding discussion in Gal. 3 the designation which we might have expected was "sons of Abraham." This, however, was the very thing which Paul sought to prove

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Burton, Galatians, p. 202; Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 149; Oepke, Galater, p. 123; Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 261; and H.J. Venetz, "'Christus anziehen.' Eine Exegese zu Gal. 3.26-27 als Beitrag zum paulinischen Taufverständnis," Freiburg Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie 20 (1973), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 261.

<sup>3</sup>See Burton, Galatians, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup>The γάρ of vs. 26 connects the thought of the verse with what precedes, but it seems to have little more force than a δέ.



regarding the Galatians.<sup>1</sup> Apparently the apostle introduced the designation "sons of God" in order to support the statement in vs. 29: "If you are of Christ, then you are the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise." This means that the Galatians already knew of their own sonship to God, and Paul was able to draw upon it in his attempt to prove their sonship to Abraham. That Paul had taught the Galatians of their divine sonship in Christ cannot be doubted. In the salutation of the letter Paul twice refers to God as "our Father" (Gal. 1.3, 4). Although the expression may be typical of Pauline salutations (cf. 1 Cor. 1.3; 2 Cor. 1.2; Phil. 1.2; Col. 1.2), it nevertheless must have been taught by Paul to his converts to have become so common in his letters. The use of Aramaic אבβα in Gal. 4.6 without explanation further indicates the Galatians' familiarity with the Fatherhood of God from Paul's teaching. Paul undoubtedly also taught the corollary of the Fatherhood of God, namely sonship of believers, as Rom. 8.12ff. and Phil. 2.15 demonstrate. Thus when he announced in Gal. 3.26, "All of you are sons of God," he was only reminding his readers of what they already knew and accepted (cf. 4.6).

Since our primary interest is in what we can learn about Paul's believer sonship conception from Gal. 3.26-29, we must now attempt a careful exegesis of these verses within the argument of Galatians and within the wider horizon of Paul's thought in order to aid in reconstructing Paul's concept of believer sonship.

## 2. Gal. 3.26

The emphasis of vs. 26 rests on the πάντες which occupies the primary position in the sentence. If the community in Galatia consisted of both Jews and Gentiles then the emphatic πάντες would have served to group both the Jewish and Gentile members of the community together within the status of divine sonship (cf. vs.

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<sup>1</sup>J.C. O'Neill, The Recovery of Paul's Letter to the Galatians (1972), pp. 54-55 uses the emphasis in the context on the sons of Abraham to argue that the original reference in 3.26 was to the sons of Abraham. In the process he completely ignores the actual argument in 3.26-29 and relies on three minor witnesses (Tertullian quoting Marcion, the same reading in Hilary, and Clement of Alexandria). His textual criticism seems to be based on the philosophy of "divide and conquer" rather than sound evaluation.



28). Not knowing the composition of the community, we must leave this as a hypothesis. What is undisputable is that Paul wished to include all of the Galatian Christians in his statement in vss. 26-29.

The divine sonship of the Galatians is "through faith in Christ Jesus" according to vs. 26. The phrase "τῆς πίστεως ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ," however, presents a complex problem. In the first place, it is ambiguous. Is it intended to mean that the Galatians' faith was "in Christ Jesus,"<sup>1</sup> or should it be joined with υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε?<sup>2</sup> If this latter suggestion proves to be correct, how is the phrase "in Christ Jesus" to be interpreted here in light of Paul's usage of the phrase and its equivalents elsewhere? On the basis of normal Pauline usage, it is doubtful that "in Christ Jesus" should be understood as the personal object of faith. Paul normally designates Christ as the object of faith through the formula διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, or an equivalent appellation, with the designation for Christ being an objective genitive (cf. Gal. 2.16, 20; 3.22; Rom. 3.22, 26; Phil. 3.9 also cf. Col. 2.12)<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the customary Pauline use of "faith" (it occurs more than 100 times in Paul) does not include the expression of the object of faith at all. Only one other instance of πίστις being followed by ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ occurs in the Pauline letters we accept without reservation. But Lightfoot, Moule, and Lohse agree that in Col. 1.4 "in Christ Jesus" does not constitute the object of faith. It is the sphere in which faith exists.<sup>4</sup> In light of this

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<sup>1</sup>Lagrange, Galates, pp. 91-92. Cf. Berger, "Abraham," p. 57 and Marchel, Abba, p. 209 seem to take this view as well, but they may well just be interpreting διὰ τῆς πίστεως without meaning to imply that ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ indicates the object of faith in vs. 26.

<sup>2</sup>This is the view of most commentators. Cf. Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 149; Burton, Galatians, pp. 202-203; Bonnard, Galates, p. 77; Oepke, Galater, p. 123; Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 261; and Schlier, Galater, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. also Phil. 1.27 and Col. 2.12 where the object of faith is indicated by the objective genitive.

<sup>4</sup>Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 131; Moule, Colossians, p. 49 (probably); and Lohse, Colossians, p. 16. Lightfoot thinks that Eph. 1.15; 1 Tim. 3.13; and 2 Tim. 3.15 are all to be explained in terms of the "sphere in which faith moves." Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 210 on Rom. 3.25.



evidence it seems probable that "in Christ Jesus" in Gal. 3.26 belongs with the words "you are sons of God." As we shall later show, the proper understanding of vss. 27-28 supports this view.

In what sense are the Galatians sons of God "in Christ Jesus?" The expression "ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ" (and its equivalents) has long been an object of particular interest to New Testament investigators, and opinions still vary as to its meaning. The number of times which it occurs in Paul precludes our attempting a complete study of the Pauline references to "in Christ" and its equivalents. Besides this would not necessarily prove helpful for determining its meaning in Gal. 3.26 because as is now recognized by many,<sup>1</sup> the expression does not have a single all-encompassing meaning. It may have a derived and general sense which means little more than the word "Christian" or "as a Christian" or "with reference to the Christian life or Christ" (cf. Rom. 9.1; 15.17; 16.22; 1 Cor. 4.10; 2 Cor. 2.14, 17; Gal. 1.22; Phil. 1.1, 13, 26; 4.7, 21; 1 Thess. 1.1; 2.14; 4.16; Philemon 16).<sup>2</sup> It may indicate that Christ is the instrument or agent of God's saving work (cf. Rom. 3.24; 8.39; 1 Cor. 1.2, 4; 2 Cor. 5.19; Gal. 2.17; Phil. 3.14).<sup>3</sup> But perhaps the most characteristic usage of "in Christ" relates the Christian believer to Christ and to a share in the salvation which he has accomplished (cf. Rom. 6.11; 8.1; 12.5; 1 Cor. 1.30; 4.15; 15.19, 22; 2 Cor. 2.14; 5.21; Gal. 2.4; 3.14; 5.6; Phil. 3.8-9, 14; 1 Thess. 3.8).<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. Best, One Body in Christ (1955), pp. 1-8; Kümmel, Theology, pp. 218-220; Moule, Phenomenon, pp. 22-23; Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, pp. 208-212; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, pp. 833-835.

<sup>2</sup>Bultmann, Theology 1, pp. 328-329; Moule, Origin of Christology, p. 54; Best, One Body, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Kümmel, Theology, p. 218; Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, p. 210; Moule, Origin of Christology, pp. 54-55; and F. Büchsel, "In Christus" bei Paulus," ZNW 42 (1949), pp. 141-158. Best, One Body, pp. 5-6 urges that even when the instrumental idea is dominant, the idea of the believers' relationship to Christ is not entirely excluded.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Kümmel, Theology, p. 219; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 127; Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, pp. 833-834; Conzelmann, Outline of Theology, p. 211 and Best, One Body, pp. 1-8, 21. The dividing line between the texts we have placed under this rubric and the texts mentioned as having a derived and general sense is not always clear-cut. The distinction noted by some between the indicative use of "in Christ" and the imperative use of "in the Lord" need not concern us.

context must determine our understanding of individual instances of the "in Christ" language. In Gal. 3.14 Paul employs the expression "in Christ Jesus" in conjunction with the saving death of Christ. According to vss. 13 and 14a, Christ died to redeem men from the curse of the law in order that the blessing of Abraham might be to the Gentiles "in Christ Jesus." The "in Christ Jesus" signifies the one through whose life and death, and in a living relation to whom, the Gentiles experience the blessings of salvation.<sup>1</sup> In 3.26 the same general meaning of the phrase seems to be present. Paul says in vs. 24 that the law was a pedagogue leading to Christ, in order that justification might be by faith. The reason the law led to Christ was because he was the source of the salvation blessings of God.<sup>2</sup> Thus when Paul turns to the Galatians in vs. 26 and declares them to be sons of God "in Christ Jesus," it is because they experience the salvation blessing of sonship in and through their relationship with the living Christ whom Paul himself describes as the Son of God on a number of occasions in Galatians (cf. 1.16; 2.20; 4.4, 6).<sup>3</sup> The line of thought expressed in vs. 26 is taken up by vs. 27, as we shall see shortly, but for the moment we must examine one final expression in vs. 26.

Paul tells the Galatians that their experience of divine sonship is related to πίστις. In fact, he explains, "You are sons of God διὰ τῆς πίστεως." H. Schlier understands the use of the word faith in vs. 26 in terms of its use in vss. 23 and 25. In these verses faith corresponds to the "objective salvation principle,"

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<sup>1</sup>Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, p. 324 maintains the "in Christ" expression "denotes religious experience (or a particular religious experience) as experience of Christ--deriving from Christ as to both its source and its character." He goes on to say that in many passages "'in Christ' or 'in the Lord' expresses not merely a rational conviction, but something more--a sense that Christ is thoroughly involved in the situation or action in question--a consciousness of Christ."

<sup>2</sup>The verb δικαιωθῆναι in vs. 24 is probably intended to refer not only to the act of justification but the state of justification which for Paul includes the idea of life (cf. vs. 21).

<sup>3</sup>That Paul understood "in Christ Jesus" in vs. 26 in the sense of Christ being a "corporative pneumatic personality" as Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 262 claims, seems doubtful to us. On "corporative personality" cf. also Best, One Body, pp. 20ff. and Moule, Origin of Christology, pp. 47ff.



the "means and principle of salvation."<sup>1</sup> Thus he claims:

πίστις kommt also hier dem Begriff der Glaubenspredigt (Röm 10.8) nahe . . . Mit πίστις ist die mit Christus gekommene neue Möglichkeit des Menschen als Wirklichkeit gemeint. Es ist also ein von jeder Schwankung im persönlichen Glaubensstand des Einzelnen unabhängiges Faktum, dass der mit Christus gekommene Glaube alle in Christus Jesus zu Söhnen Gottes gemacht hat.<sup>2</sup>

This ignores the use of διὰ (τῆς) πίστεως in 2.16 and 3.14, as well as the majority of references to πίστις in chapter 3. In 2.16 Paul speaks of a man being justified διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ. The objective genitive following πίστεως leaves no doubt that the apostle has in mind the actual act of believing in Christ. Although the objective genitive does not occur with διὰ τῆς πίστεως in 3.14, the repeated use of the expression οἱ ἐκ πίστεως in 3.7ff. as a counterpart to "Abraham who ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ" in 3.6 makes it almost certain that πίστις in 3.14 refers to the act of believing. In 3.22 Paul explains that the Scripture shut up all things under sin in order that "ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ δοθῇ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν." As in 2.16, the objective genitive assures us that faith is the activity of believing in this passage, and the participle πιστεύουσιν confirms this. This verse also adds certainty to our contention regarding πίστις in vs. 14 because there, as here, it is the ἐπαγγελία which is referred to and said to come by means of believing. In light of vs. 22, it is reasonable to assume that Christ is the unexpressed object of faith in vs. 14. Even in vs. 24, which is sandwiched between vss. 23 and 25 where πίστις relates to the salvation principle of faith rather than the actual act of believing, πίστις refers to the act of believing whereby a man is justified (cf. 2.16). Thus when Paul says in vs. 26, "You are sons of God διὰ τῆς πίστεως," there can be little doubt that he refers to the Galatians' act of believing: they became sons of God through their belief in Jesus

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<sup>1</sup>Schlier, Galater, p. 167. Venetz, "Christus anziehen," p. 8 says of vs. 25, "Wo Paulus vom Kommen des Glauben spricht, wirklich schwierig zu entscheiden ist, ob es sich nun um das neue Heilsprinzip handelt oder um das Heilsereignis, Christus."

<sup>2</sup>Schlier, Galater, p. 172.

Christ,<sup>1</sup> just as justification (2.16; 3.8, 24), the Spirit (3.2, 5, 14), the promise (3.14, 22), and Abrahamic sonship (3.7) were predicated on faith as an act of believing. Within the polemic of Gal. 2-3, the assertion in vs. 26 that the salvation blessing of sonship comes through faith represents the final explicit reference to a salvation blessing achieved through faith rather than by works of the law.

### 3. Gal. 3.27

The γάρ of vs. 27 serves to connect the thought of the verse with vs. 26, thereby offering the grounds or proof for the statement in vs. 26. Some scholars think that vs. 27 provides the basis only for the "in Christ Jesus" phrase of vs. 26.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that Paul intentionally juxtaposed εἰς χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε (vs. 27a) with ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (vs. 26c). But if vs. 27 grounds "in Christ Jesus," then it is the main clause "you put on Christ" and not the relative clause "as many of you as were baptized into Christ" that does so. Although the "in Christ Jesus" of vs. 26 does stand in a place of stress at the end of the sentence,<sup>3</sup> it seems more probable that Paul wanted to ground the main theme of the verse, the Galatians' divine sonship in Christ through faith in him,<sup>4</sup> than one element within the whole. This is especially the case when it is recognized that "in Christ Jesus" is not an independent statement but qualifies "you are sons of God

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 262; Burton, Galatians, p. 203; G.R. Beasley-Murray, Baptism in the New Testament (1962), pp. 150f.; Venetz, "Christus anziehen," pp. 10-11. Bonnard, Galates, p. 77 and S. Légasse, "Foi et baptême chez saint Paul: Étude de Galates 3, 26-27," Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique 74 (1973), pp. 88-89 go to great pains to insure that "faith" in vs. 26 is not understood as a work. Thus Bonnard says, "la foi est l'acte par lequel je reconnais que Dieu fait de moi son fils en Jésus-Christus." While this explanation may not be wrong at a fundamental level, it does seem to say more than Paul wishes to say.

<sup>2</sup>Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 149; Schlier, Galater, p. 173; Beasley-Murray, Baptism, p. 147 and Best, One Body, p. 69. Venetz, "Christus anziehen," p. 14 claims this is the position of most Catholic authors.

<sup>3</sup>It is conceivable that it was placed here in order to juxtapose it with vs. 27a.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Burton, Galatians, pp. 203-204; Oepke, Galater, p. 124; Venetz, "Christus anziehen," pp. 14-15, 29; Lagrange, Galates, p. 92; Légasse, "Foi," p. 98; and A. Grail, "Le Baptême dans l'Épître aux Galates (III, 26-IV, 7)," RB 58 (1951), p. 508.



The statement in vs. 27 has received a great deal of attention from exegetes of Paul principally because of its reference to baptism. While less discussed than baptism, the second image of the verse,  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\nu \epsilon\nu\delta\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ , has also engendered interest both in its connection with baptism and in its own right. Within the structure of vs. 27 the relative clause " $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\sigma\iota \epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\nu \epsilon\beta\alpha\pi\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\tau\epsilon$ " provides the subject of the main clause " $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\nu \epsilon\nu\epsilon\delta\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\sigma\theta\epsilon$ ." The  $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\sigma\iota$  is dependent upon the  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  of vs. 26, and itself includes all the Galatians who were Christians. It certainly cannot be construed to indicate a subgroup among the Galatian Christians who were baptized as opposed to others who were not.<sup>2</sup> But what is the relationship between being baptized into Christ and putting on Christ? Dunn believes the two are "alternative and interchangeable expressions for the same reality," and he bases this view on his assumption that  $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\sigma\theta\eta\kappa\alpha\iota$  like  $\epsilon\nu\delta\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  is used metaphorically here.<sup>3</sup> Although this is possible, it is more probable that Paul refers to the actual act of baptism. It constituted a decisive and tangible experience for the Galatian Christians at the beginning of their life in Christ. To those who were baptized, as Paul's converts were (cf. 1 Cor. 1.13-17), the aorist passive  $\epsilon\beta\alpha\pi\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\tau\epsilon$  could hardly do otherwise than remind them of their physical baptismal experience. In point of fact, the words, " $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\nu \epsilon\beta\alpha\pi\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\tau\epsilon$ " are, in all probability, an abbreviation of the expression " $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma \tau\acute{o} \acute{\omicron}\nu\omicron\mu\alpha \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon \text{ } \text{I}\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon \epsilon\beta\alpha\pi\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\tau\epsilon$ ."<sup>4</sup> Quite obviously such

<sup>1</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 262 maintains, "Die Partikel γάρ begründet . . . warum die Gottessohnschaft der Gläubigen 'in Christus Jesus' ihren Seinsgrund hat . . ." This seems to us the only way in which one may argue for vs. 27 supporting "in Christ Jesus" in vs. 26, but even this leads to a distortion of the actual thought of the two verses.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Burton, Galatians, p. 203. On the meaning of  $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\sigma\iota$  as "all who," see Arndt-Gingrich, " $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\sigma\iota$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\omicron\nu$ ," p. 590.

<sup>3</sup>Dunn, Baptism, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup>This view of the meaning of "You were baptized into Christ" is widely held. Cf. Burton, Galatians, pp. 203-205; Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 262; Oepke, Galater, p. 124; Beasley-Murray, Baptism, p. 147; Schnackenburg, Baptism, pp. 16-21; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 192; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 122; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 301. Against this view see Käsemann, Römer, pp. 155-156; Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 207, 403; and Best, One Body, pp. 65-73. In 1 Cor. 1.14, 15 Paul employs the phrase "you were baptized  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma \tau\acute{o} \acute{\omicron}\nu\omicron\mu\alpha \pi\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon$ " which suggests that Christian baptism was "into the name of Christ." 1 Cor. 10.2 speaks of baptism "into Moses" and probably was formed on the model of "baptized into Christ." It means no more than baptized "with reference to and in relationship to Moses." Although 1 Cor. 10.2 cannot be made determinative for "baptized into Christ," it nevertheless suggests the direction in which it should be understood.

an expression would refer to the actual baptismal experience of the Galatians. If vs. 27a does concern the baptismal experience of the Galatians directly, then vs. 27a and b are not simply two metaphors referring to the same thing, as Dunn suggests. Instead vs. 27b represents a metaphorical expression which Paul wished to associate with the experience of baptism.<sup>1</sup> The reason he did so can only become clear through an investigation of the metaphor and its meaning in its current context.

The key to the metaphorical statement in vs. 27b, "you put on Christ," is the verb ἐνδύεσθαι. The metaphorical use of the verb ἐνδύειν was well-established long before the time of Paul. The Septuagint, for example, employs it in a metaphorical manner on a number of occasions. The Lord is clothed with majesty and power (Ps. 92.1 LXX; cf. Ps. 104.1 LXX; and Is. 51.9); men wear righteousness (Job. 29.14; cf. Sir. 27.8); the priests and others are clothed in salvation (Ps. 131.9 LXX; Is. 61.10); but men may also be clothed in shame (Job 8.22; cf. Ps. 34.26 LXX). The good wife wears strength and dignity (Pro. 31.26 LXX).<sup>2</sup> Three particularly interesting passages in the Septuagint are Jud. 6.34; 1 Chr. 12.19; and 2 Chr. 24.20. The texts of Jud. 6.34 and 1 Chr. 12.19 are uncertain, but Rahlfs' edition is probably correct to read ἐνέδυσε(ν).<sup>3</sup> In each of these texts the Spirit of God is said to have clothed someone; the implication is that he clothed them with power or inspired

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<sup>1</sup>Beasley-Murray, Baptism, p. 129 and Schnackenburg, Baptism, p. 24 think that a causal relation exists between vs. 27a and 27b, but see the argument of Burton, Galatians, pp. 205-206 against a causal connection.

<sup>2</sup>Venetz, "Christus anziehen," p. 17 points out with respect to the Old Testament, "Alle Anzeichen deuten darauf hin, dass auf die Vorstellung des Überziehens eines Kleides kein Gewicht gelegt wird, dass das Bild verblasst, so dass man das Verb ἐνδύεσθαι gut mit 'übernehmen,' 'sich aneignen,' 'übersetzen könnte.'" For an extensive treatment of ἐνδύειν in the Old Testament see E. Haulotte, Symbolique du Vêtement selon la Bible (1966).

<sup>3</sup>The reading preferred by Rahlfs in the case of Jud. 6.34 is supported by Lucian against the evidence of codices A and B, and Origen: In the case of 1 Chr. 12.19, codex A supports a different reading from the one adopted by Rahlfs. The Hebrew of both Jud. 6.34 and 1 Chr. 12.19 has the root עָדָה which is consistently rendered by ἐνδύειν in the LXX. The alternative reading of the LXX for ἐνδύειν in both passages is ἐνδυναμοῦν. This word only occurs one other time in the LXX (Ps. 51.7), but there it translates עָזָה. In 2 Chr. 24.20 עָזָה is translated by ἐνδύειν. On the basis of this evidence Rahlfs would appear to be justified in preferring



them.

It has sometimes been suggested that the background to Paul's metaphorical application of ἐνδύεσθαι in relation to baptism is to be found in the mystery religions, but this is highly improbable.<sup>1</sup> A Gnostic background is proposed by some,<sup>2</sup> but the parallels are either too late to be of any relevance or differ in character from Paul's use.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the richness of the Biblical usage of the metaphor and its use in Greek writings unconnected with Gnosticism and the mystery religions provide a clear basis for the Pauline applications of the metaphor.<sup>4</sup>

Paul employs the verb ἐνδύεσθαι on nine occasions apart from Gal. 3.27, always in the middle voice (1 Thess. 5.8; 1 Cor. 15.53 (2X), 54; 2 Cor. 5.3; Rom. 13.12, 14; Col. 3.10, 12).<sup>5</sup> The four references in 1 and 2 Corinthians all relate to putting something on in life after death, while 1 Thess. 5.8 and Rom. 13.12 concern putting on spiritual armour and weaponry respectively. Col. 3.12 calls for Christians to put on virtues like holiness, love, and compassion. In relation to Gal. 3.27, Rom. 13.14 and Col. 3.10 are of special interest.

Rom. 13.14 is of special significance because it is the only other passage in Paul besides Gal. 3.27 where Paul makes Christ the object of the verb ἐνδύεσθαι. It occurs in the exhortative section Rom. 12.1-15.13. Beginning in Rom. 12 Paul expatiates on the ethical imperative of the Gospel as a "realization or actualization"

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to read ἐνδύειν in Jud. 6.34 and 1 Chr. 12.19.

<sup>1</sup>Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul, pp. 134-135, Schnackenburg, Baptism, pp. 23-24; and Lohse, Colossians, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. E. Käsemann, Leib und Leib Christi. Eine Untersuchung zur paulinischen Begrifflichkeit (1933), pp. 87-94 and Oepke, Galater, p. 125. P.W. van der Horst, "Observations on a Pauline Expression," NTS 19 (1972-73), p. 181 wrongly attributes this view to E. Lohse.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Lohse, Colossians, pp. 141-142; Van der Horst, "Observations," pp. 181-182; and Eltester, Eikon, p. 160.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, p. 689; W.L. Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles (1939), p. 138; and Haulotte, Vêtement, pp. 210-211. Van der Horst, "Observations," pp. 184-187 cites a very interesting parallel to Col. 3.9 in which the philosopher Pyrrho says, "χαλεπὸν ἐστὶν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκδύναί" with reference to a contradiction between his behavior and his philosophy.

<sup>5</sup>The verb also occurs in Eph. 4.24; 6.11, 14.

of the dogmatic indicative as set forth in the preceding chapters.<sup>1</sup> The immediate context of Rom. 13.14 involves an exhortation based on the nearness of the day of final salvation (vss. 10-13). Paul exhorts his readers, "Let us put off (ἀποθώμεθα) the works of darkness" and "put on (ἐνδυσώμεθα) the weaponry of light" (vs. 12), "to live as is seemly in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in sexual excess and debauchery, and not in strife and jealousy" (vs. 13). He then goes on to instruct, "But put on (ἐνδύσασθε) the Lord Jesus Christ and stop making (μὴ ποιεῖσθε) provision for the lusts of the flesh" (vs. 14). Vss. 11-14 are logically connected with Rom. 6 and the results of baptism because they call for behavior flowing from the fact that the believer is "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (6.11). It is exhortation calling for a realization in the readers' lives of the behavior that must accompany their conversion and baptism, a behavior based on their new life in Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> Thus "to put on the Lord Jesus Christ" in Rom. 13.14 relates to living a new moral and spiritual existence determined by Jesus Christ and his Spirit (cf. Rom. 8.1-14).

In Col. 3.9-10 Paul utilizes the dual image of "taking off the old man with his deeds" and "putting on the new man who is being renewed unto knowledge according to the image of the one creating him." As with Rom. 13.14, the verses surrounding Col. 3.9-10 are exhortative in character (cf. 3.5ff. and 3.12ff.). The hortatory context of the aorist participles ἀπεκδυσάμενοι and ἐνδυσάμενοι has led some to claim that these participles should be construed as imperatives, and they find further support for this in the use of ἐνδύεσθαι elsewhere in Paul because it is normally found as an imperative.<sup>3</sup> This last point loses some of its

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<sup>1</sup>On the relation of the indicative to the imperative in Paul see Furnish, Theology and Ethics, pp. 224-227.

<sup>2</sup>The connection of Rom. 13.14 with the theme of Rom. 6 and baptism is widely noted. Cf. Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 341-342; Haulotte, Vêtement, p. 222; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 254; Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, p. 688; and Käsemann, Römer, p. 347 who says of vss. 11-14, "Unsere Verse sind als typische Taufermahnung zu betrachten." To some extent we suspect that Gal. 3.27 leads many scholars to note the connection between Rom. 13.14 and Rom. 6 and baptism, but even without Gal. 3.27 such a connection is completely justifiable.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Lightfoot, Colossians, pp. 212-213 and Lohse, Colossians, p. 141.



significance in light of Gal. 3.27 where the aorist indicative ἐνεδύσασθε occurs in relation to baptism (cf. Col. 3.11 with Gal. 3.28). The real problem for those taking the participles of Col. 3.9-10 in an imperatival sense, however, arises from the verse which follows. In vs. 11 Paul asserts, "ὅπου οὐκ ἔνι Ἑλλήν καὶ Ἰουδαῖος κτλ." If the participles of vss. 9-10 are imperatives, then, for the Colossians, the statement in vs. 11 was left hanging as though unfounded until they acted on the imperatives of vss. 9-10.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, however, Paul understands the unity suggested by vs. 11 to already exist among those who are baptized (cf. Gal. 3.27-28; 1 Cor. 12.13). For this reason, the participles in vss. 9-10 are better explained as providing the reason for the imperative "stop lying to one another" in vs. 9a and the necessary supposition for the declaration in vs. 11.<sup>2</sup>

To what then does "having put on the new man who is being renewed unto knowledge according to the image of him who is creating him" refer? It has been shown in a different context that the creator is God and the "image" referred to is Christ. The "new man" cannot be identified with Christ as such because he is the creation of God and requires continual renewal (ἀνακαινούμενοι) unto knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the obvious allusion of the passage to Gen. 1.26-27 suggests that the "new man" is created by God κατ'εἰκόνα and that image is Christ. The two participial phrases "ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ" (vs. 9b) and ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον κτλ." probably allude to the Colossians' conversion and perhaps more specifically to their

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<sup>1</sup>The "new man" of vs. 10 appears to be the presupposition for the ὅπου of vs. 11 according to Arndt-Gingrich, "ὅπου," p. 579.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. T.K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians (no date), pp. 283-284; O. Merk, Handeln aus Glauben (1968), p. 205; and Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 235-236.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Best, One Body, pp. 67-68 and Professor Barrett, First Adam, p. 98. Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 246-248 associates Christ with the new man but in a very special sense: "Der neue Mensch ist κατ'εἰκόνα, ein Abbild des himmlischen Christus, und in dem Abbild ist immer das Urbild persönlich anwesend, wonach der neue Mensch auch χριστός genannt werden kann." But as Jervell recognizes, the new man is not simply identical with Christ because Christ has a separate existence from the new man. The new man exists because of the presence of Christ and his Spirit in him (spiritual renewal), but the new man is not simply Christ or the Spirit.

baptismal experience.<sup>1</sup> In baptism, Paul reminds them, they were buried with Christ and were raised through faith (2.12). He proceeds to connect this with new life based in moral renewal (2.13) and spiritual renewal (3.1-4, cf. Rom. 6.2-11). Thus in baptism the old man with his evil practices was shed and the new man, who is being renewed in knowledge of God and his will (cf. Col. 1.19-10), was taken up. It is only in an ethical-spiritual sense that the "new man" may be recreated in the image of Christ during the period of earthly existence, and this through the indwelling Spirit of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

In Gal. 3.26-27 the experience of "putting on Christ" somehow supported Paul's claim that the Galatians were sons of God. The aorist indicative form of the verb ἐνεδύσασθε) indicates that Paul referred to a past event in the Galatians' Christian life.<sup>3</sup> Vs. 27a implies that this experience had an intrinsic connection with the Galatians' baptismal experience, baptism being a focal point in their conversion and initiation into the new life in Christ. Rom. 6.3-4 along with Col. 2.12-13 show that in Paul's mind, and therefore presumably in the understanding of his converts, baptism signified a death to one's old sinful self and, by analogy to Christ's resurrection, signified the entrance into a qualitatively new life, a new ethical and spiritual existence (cf. Rom. 6.5-11 and Col. 3.1-4). Because of the connection to baptism in Gal. 3.27,

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<sup>1</sup>This possibility is supported by the relation of vs. 10 to vs. 11. The language and thought of Col. 3.11 occurs in Gal. 3.28 and 1 Cor. 12.13. In both Gal. 3 and 1 Cor. 12 the idea of the oneness of Christians is conjoined to statements about baptism. M. Bouttier, "Complexio Oppositorum: Sur les Formules de 1 Cor. XII.13; Gal. III.26-8; Col. III.10, 11," *NTS* 23 (1976-77) pp. 1-19 argues that the passages from Gal. 3, 1 Cor. 12, and Col. 3 reflect "la persistance d'une sentence où, à l'occasion du baptême, le christianisme hellénistique a exprimé sa conscience de constituer la communauté eschatologique réunissant, par la grâce de Dieu, ceux que tout séparait." He thinks that this idea arose before Paul but was preserved by his school. This is, however, nothing more than a shot in the dark. There is no reason why the reunification theme may not have originated with Paul (cf. G. Bornkamm, *Paul*, p. 39) perhaps in conjunction with his concept of the σῶμα (cf. 1 Cor. 12.13).

<sup>2</sup>The words πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν χριστός at the end of Col. 3.11 suggests that the thought of Christ's indwelling of the believer (cf. Rom. 8.9ff. and Gal. 2.20) may not have been far from Paul's mind when he wrote vs. 10. Cf. Jervell, *Imago Dei*, pp. 246-248.

<sup>3</sup>Dunn, *Baptism*, p. 110 thinks that the middle voice of ἐνεδύσασθε and the parallels in Rom. 13.14, Col. 3.10, and Eph. 4.24



"putting on Christ" in 3.27b may refer to the new moral and spiritual existence in which the Christian's life is determined by the death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Both Rom. 13.14 and Col. 3.9-11 provide support for this interpretation. In both of these texts the "putting on" metaphor relates to the new moral and spiritual existence of the believer which has come about through his relationship to the salvation effected by Christ's death and resurrection. How then does "putting on Christ" confirm vs. 26? Sonship to God in Christ Jesus through faith is confirmed by the new moral and spiritual existence of the Christian brought about through his taking up of Christ, and the salvation determined by him, in conversion and baptism; by so doing, he comes to share in Christ's own Sonship. Paul seems to rely on the fact that the Galatians would understand the allusion. This in turn suggests that Paul thought that the new moral and religious existence of the believer was to be understood in connection with the new sonship relation established with God (cf. Rom. 8.12ff.).

#### 4. Gal. 3.28-29

The lack of a connective in vs. 28 to join it with vs. 27 sets it off from the preceding two verses to a certain extent. The

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to Gal. 3.27b indicate that an act of the will is signified by the sentence "you put on Christ" in Gal. 3.27.

<sup>1</sup>Venetz, "Christus anziehen," p. 28 comes to much the same conclusion relating vs. 27b to Rom. 6.4: "die Galater in der Taufe Christus angezogen haben, so ist das 'Wandeln im neuen Leben' das Ergebnis aus der Tatsache, dass wir in der Taufe auferweckt wurden durch den Glauben." Dunn, Baptism, p. 110 maintains, "To put on Christ" is simply a figurative usage to describe more expressively the Spiritual transformation which makes one a Christian." Dunn, however, very explicitly separates this from ritual acts, namely, baptism. He goes on to say, "The spiritual reality of which Paul is thinking is probably the gift of the Spirit, and he would probably equate putting on Christ with receiving the Spirit of Christ." This understanding seems to stand in contradiction, to some extent, with Dunn's view that ἐνεδύσασθε emphasizes the volitional character of the act; one does not receive the Spirit by an act of the will but in response to an act of the will. The reception of the Spirit is undoubtedly a significant part of the experience of putting on Christ (cf. Légasse, "Foi et Baptême," p. 94 and Schnackenburg, Baptism, pp. 28-29), but this perhaps limits what Paul means in Gal. 3.27b too much. Cf. Bouttier, "Complexio Oppositorum," p. 7 on the meaning of "put on Christ."

initial asyndeton may result from the rhetorical asyndeton of the three pairs of opposites.<sup>1</sup> The theme of the abolition of social opposites in Christ was probably connected with baptism.<sup>2</sup> The first pair of contrasting elements, Jews and Greeks (= Gentiles), which no longer exists, according to Paul, has an obvious relevance to the Galatian situation. If the religious distinctions between Jews and Greeks have been broken down in Christ, then there is no basis for Gentiles becoming Jewish proselytes in order to share in the salvation blessings promised to Abraham. The end to "Jewishness" and "Gentileness" pertains to the standing of people from these groups before God and with respect to the salvation which comes from God. The other two pairs of contrasting identities, slave and free, male and female, do not seem to have any direct bearing on the argument in Galatians. They were probably included simply because they were commonly placed alongside the first and most important pair of abolished contrarities.<sup>3</sup>

The second half of vs. 28 confirms and explicates the meaning of the three pairs of opposites which are irrelevant with respect to sharing in God's salvation. It is formed on the model of vs. 26 with εἰς replacing the words υἱοῦ θεοῦ διὰ τῆς πίστεως from vs. 26. The key to the meaning of vs. 28d, "You are all one in Christ Jesus," lies in the interpretation of the εἰς. Perhaps the most common explanation of the εἰς relates it to the idea of a corporate personality in which believers participate in Christ.<sup>4</sup> Although this concept is frequently discussed in relation

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<sup>1</sup>On asyndeton for rhetorical effect see Blass-Debrunner-Funk, sect. 462, 494.

<sup>2</sup>Bouttier, "Complexio Oppositorum," pp. 1-19.

<sup>3</sup>For scholars besides Bouttier (see note 2) supporting the formulary character of vs. 28 see Eckert, Urchristliche Verkündigung, p. 88, n. 1. Eckert himself thinks it is a possibility. See also H.D. Betz, "Spirit, Freedom, and Law. Paul's Message to the Galatian Churches," Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok 39 (1974), pp. 145-153. He claims that Gal. 3.26-28 is a pre-Pauline "macarism" associated with baptism. His form-critical observations, in particular, are unfounded.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 264-266; Best, One Body, p. 80; Oepke, Galater, p. 126; Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul, p. 118; Schlier, Galater, p. 175; Hanson, Unity of the Church, pp. 81-82; and Davies, Paul, p. 57.



to a number of Pauline passages, not the least of which is Gal. 3.26-28, the idea remains very imprecise as it is normally expounded.<sup>1</sup> That the apostle Paul, who taught the individual resurrection of the dead (cf. 1 Cor. 15.3ff.), believed in a realistic incorporation of Christians into a corporate personality seems improbable. It does not appear to be appreciated sufficiently that the corporative personality idea, if treated realistically, implies an ontological absorption of individual personalities into the corporate personality. In light of this, those instances in Paul where incorporation into a unity is implied (cf. Rom. 12.4-5; 1 Cor. 12.12-13; Col. 3.15), should be regarded as figurative rather than real. Thus Gal. 3.28 does not refer to a mystical (or perhaps more correctly in modern terms mythical) incorporation into a corporate personality. It relates to a figurative and qualitative oneness based on the Galatian common and equal sharing in the salvation benefits deriving from Christ's death and resurrection, and to this extent, relates to their sharing in the death and life of Christ himself.<sup>2</sup> They are therefore "one in Christ Jesus."

The protasis of the conditional clause found in vs. 29 reveals that vss. 26-28 have one primary purpose for Paul; they are to establish the connection of the Galatians to Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup> The reason for doing this becomes clear in the apodosis of the conditional sentence: if the Galatians are of Christ, that is, have a share in him and the salvation he has brought, then they are the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3.16 and the peculiar interpretation it places on "Abraham's seed" is

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<sup>1</sup> Even so convinced an advocate of corporative personality in Christ as C.F.D. Moule is forced to admit "puzzlement" in how to handle or apply the concept. See Moule, Origin of Christology, pp. 47-53. Recently the supposed Old Testament background for the corporative personality idea has been challenged by J.W. Rogerson, "The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality: a Re-examination," JTS 21 (1970), pp. 1ff.

<sup>2</sup> Both Moule, Origin of Christology, p. 72 and Burton, Galatians, pp. 207-208, while favoring the corporate personality concept for Gal. 3.28, admit that the εἰς might be taken in a qualitative sense to imply that there is no differentiation before God.

<sup>3</sup> Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 266 argues that the εἰ of vs. 29 approaches to having a causal sense.

recalled in vs. 29. Christ is identified as the one seed of Abraham and therefore is made the recipient of the promises of God, including the inheritance (vss. 16, 18, 19). It is through the Galatians' identification with the one seed of Abraham, Christ, that they then may be said to be "seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise." But it also means that even Jews by birth, only have access to the promised inheritance through Jesus Christ; hence, with regard to salvation, there is no longer a distinction between Jew and Gentile but all must become heirs of Abraham through Christ (cf. Gal. 4.21-31).<sup>1</sup>

In the final analysis, however, the inheritance at stake is not the patrinomy of Abraham but the patrinomy which comes from God. This may provide a further reason for why Paul introduced the theme of divine sonship in Gal. 3.26. If one is a son of God he is an heir of God (cf. 4.7). If he is an heir of God then he must also effectively be related to Abraham since the inheritance of God was promised to Abraham and his seed, who is Jesus Christ.

#### E. The Theme of Believer Sonship

##### In Gal. 4.1-7

Previously it was argued that a break in the argument of Galatians occurs between 3.29 and 4.1. The λέγω δέ at the beginning of vs. 4, is to be understood as resumptive, not of the preceding argument but of the themes of 3.23-29. 4.1-7 provides a new line of argument regarding the problems of freedom and enslavement, sonship and heirship. The thematic connection between 4.1ff. is borne out by the recurrence of several terms and images from the foregoing chapter. The term κληρονόμος and the concept it involves are taken up from 3.29 by 4.1-7. The temporal framework of 4.1-4 has clear analogies with the time conception present in 3.23-25, and the imagery of the νόμιος under the ἐπίτροποι parallels the thought of the παιδαγωγός in 3.24-25. The statement in vs. 3 concerning the enslaving στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου seems to relate to the function of the law before the coming of Christ in 3.23-25, as the first person plural of 4.3 indicates (cf. 4.9, 21-5.1), and the same is true of 4.5a.<sup>2</sup> The believer sonship idea of 4.5-7

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Berger, "Abraham," p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>G. Delling, "στοιχέω κτλ.," TDNT 7, p. 684. On the στοιχεῖα see the references supra, p. 117, n. 2.



connects to 3.26-27 where the idea was first introduced. But in spite of these similarities, the thought of 4.1-7 stands in independence from the preceding argument. Paul directs the argument in 4.1-7 to establishing the freedom of sonship which Christians enjoy over against both the enslaving power of the law and pagan religions.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, 4.1-7 prepare for Paul's statements in 4.8-11.

The basic thought flow of Gal. 4.1-5 has been presented already in a previous chapter and the meaning of 4.4 and 5a has received special attention. On account of this it is unnecessary to treat 4.1-5a in detail here, but a brief rehearsal of the thought progression in 4.1-5 will help set the stage for examining the believer sonship theme in 4.1-7. Paul employs two different metaphors in 4.1-5 though both relate to the theme of sonship and heirship.<sup>2</sup> In vss. 1-3 Paul portrays the pre-Christian past of both Jews and Gentiles (cf. vs. 3) as a period of minority in which, though they were heirs, they were no better off than slaves. The Jews were in servitude to the law (cf. 3.23-25) and the Gentiles were enslaved to false gods (cf. 4.8). Such was the condition of mankind before God sent his Son at the fullness of time to accomplish eschatological salvation for all men (vs. 4). Vs. 5a refers to the Son's redemption of those under the law in the form of a purpose clause; by this we may perhaps understand Paul as meaning those under the curse of the law from 3.13, which may include the Gentiles as well, as we have seen. However this may be, vs. 5a introduces a new metaphor in which the enslavement of the pre-Christian past is placed under a different image from the one in 4.1-3. In vs. 5 Christians are portrayed as slaves who required redemption before they could be adopted into a sonship relation which would make them heirs.

From the perspective of this present study, Gal. 4.4-7 has special significance because it explicitly unites the twin themes of Christ's Sonship and the sonship of believers. Christ the Son of God was sent into human existence (born of a woman, born under the law)

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<sup>1</sup>The theme of enslavement and freedom appears to have a special connection with the theme of sonship as Gal. 4.1-7 and Rom. 8.1-17 indicate.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Dunn, Baptism, pp. 112-113.

to bring about redemption from enslavement to the law and to enable humans to enter into a sonship relation with God through the Spirit. Thus Gal. 4.4-7 presents a classic instance of what M.D. Hooker describes as "interchange in Christ": "Christ becomes what we are, in order that we might become what he is."<sup>1</sup> The argument in 4.4-7 has the amazing effect of making sonship and heirship to God the all-encompassing goal of the saving activity of God. In other words 4.4-7 makes sonship and its concomitant heirship, the essence of eschatological salvation. To what extent it is determined by Paul's deep-seated theological convictions is of great importance for assessing the significance of the sonship theme in Pauline thought. To put the matter differently, could Paul have said the same thing in a different way? We can only answer this after further study of this passage and Romans 8.

#### 1. Adoptive Sonship in Gal. 4.5

The word υἱοθεσία and the idea which it conveys requires brief attention before we attempt to explain vss. 5b-7. According to P.W. von Martitz υἱοθεσία "is attested only from the 2nd century B.C. and means 'adoption as a child'; there are, however, older verbal equivalents υἱὸν τίθεμαι and υἱὸν ποιέομαι [sic] in the sense 'to adopt.'"<sup>2</sup> The word does not occur in the Septuagint and only occurs five times in the New Testament, four times in Paul (Gal. 4.5; Rom. 8.15, 23;<sup>3</sup> 9.4) and once in Ephesians (Eph. 1.5), a letter intimately connected with the Pauline tradition. Adoption was a common practice in Greco-Roman culture with its almost exclusive purposes being to assure a progeny and to provide a legitimate heir.<sup>4</sup> The same does not appear to have been true of

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<sup>1</sup>Hooker, "Interchange," p. 352. Cf. Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 168 on the chiasm in vss. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup>P.W. von Martitz, "υἱοθεσία," TDNT 8, p. 397. For a general discussion of adoption in antiquity see L. Wenger and A. Oepke, "Adoption," RAC 1, col. 99-112.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 8.23 is textually uncertain, but υἱοθεσία is probably to be accepted as the original reading. See infra on this passage.

<sup>4</sup>Hester, Inheritance, p. 58. Cf. F. Lyall, "Roman Law in the Writings of Paul—Adoption," JBL 88 (1969), p. 459 and Martitz, "υἱοθεσία," p. 398. Von Martitz suggests that adoption was sometimes used as a means to provide for old age.



Jewish culture from the Old Testament onward. The practice of multiple wives (in the earliest period), female heirs and inheritance by next of kin (cf. Nu. 27.1-11), and levirate marriages (cf. Dt. 25.5-10) provided the institutionalized means for insuring heirs without recourse to the legal practice of adoption. Undoubtedly informal adoption did take place,<sup>1</sup> but nothing is known of the legal institution of such a practice. F. Lyall maintains, "No Jewish legal writing contains any provisions which can be construed as adoption, and the human examples we have in the Old Testament can be explained without resort to the concept."<sup>2</sup> If this is correct, then Paul's use of the adoption idea and the term υἱοθεσία must be based on Greco-Roman practices. Nevertheless, Paul applies the term υἱοθεσία to Israel as one of its privileges as the people of God (Rom. 9.4), and in fact gives it a prominent position by placing it immediately after the privilege of being Israelites, the privilege which determines their right to all the others.<sup>3</sup> The only possible conclusion which may be drawn is that Paul conceived of Israel's frequently mentioned sonship in the Old Testament in terms of divine adoption. The image of adoption lent itself to this task admirably because it emphasized the initiative of the adopter. On the religious plane this could then be understood in terms of God's election and grace towards Israel. In the case of Rom. 9.4 it is doubtful that υἱοθεσία may be limited to the act of adoption since in the Old Testament the emphasis rests completely on the status of sonship which God granted to Israel.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 398.

<sup>2</sup> Lyall, "Roman Law," p. 459. In support of this claim, he analyzes the possible Old Testament exceptions showing them to rest either on foreign practices or showing them not to be genuine exceptions.

<sup>3</sup> The other privileges were the glory, the covenants, the law (νομοθεσία), the worship (of God), and the promises, as well as to be from the fathers and to have Christ be born of their number. On the adoptive sonship of Israel see M.W. Schoenberg, "Huiiothesia: The Adoptive Sonship of the Israelites," American Ecclesiastical Review 43 (1960), pp. 261-273.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ibid., p. 265. Schoenberg further thinks that υἱοθεσία refers "to an external and objective privilege rather than to an internal status" in Rom. 9.4. But he also thinks that some held adoption as "an internal disposition of soul and so became sons of God in fact, the true seed of Abraham" (p. 266). Rom. 9.6ff. implies such a differentiation whether one wishes to accept Schoenberg's

Paul's use of the adoption terminology in Rom. 9.4 without further detail perhaps suggests that the image was a common one. Certainly the practice of adoption was widespread enough in the ancient world to render the verbal image created by υἱοθεσία transparent, even in a transferred sense.<sup>1</sup> For this reason it is unnecessary to attempt to specify the exact legal practices behind any of Paul's references.<sup>2</sup>

In Gal. 4.5 the "receiving of adoption" by the Christian constitutes the gracious purpose of God in sending his Son into human existence. Its character as one of the explicit saving purposes of God in Christ gives it the appearance of being a fundamental expression of salvation (cf. Rom. 8.12-30). Like justification, adoption is solely the act of God and is juridical in nature. But unlike the verb δικαιόω, which refers exclusively to acquittal or the conferring of the status of righteousness on an individual,<sup>3</sup> υἱοθεσία implies the creation of a new personal relationship between God and the man who is adopted. The new relationship of sonship is effected through the work of the Spirit in the individual (cf. vs. 6; Rom. 8.14-17). Adoption also means that the one who is adopted has become an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ to God (Gal. 4.7; Rom. 8.17). In the context of Galatians this conception has decisive importance. By it Paul affirms the completeness of the Galatians' religious experience and

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terminology or not. Cf. Twisselman, Gotteskindschaft, pp. 56-57. On the possibility that υἱοθεσία sometimes implies the result of the act of adoption see besides Schoenberg, E. Schweizer, "υἱοθεσία," TDNT 8, p. 399 and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 398, n. 1.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Philo, Sobr., 56 where Philo uses the word εἰσποιητός of those who attain to wisdom: "μόνος γὰρ εὐγενὴς ἅτε θεὸν ἐπιγεγραμμένος πατέρα καὶ γεγονὼς εἰσποιητός αὐτῷ μόνος υἱός." This clearly shows that Paul was not alone in using the adoption idea in a transferred sense.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 197-198, n. 55. The attempt of Hester, Inheritance, pp. 59-62 to equate the image in Gal. 4 with the Roman institution known as adrogation appears forced. For example, he fails to notice that the στοιχεῖα of vs. 3 are not properly part of the second image (vss. 4-5) and that the redemption image in vs. 5 comes from 3.13.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 95 and J.A. Ziesler, The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul. A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry (1972), p. 168.



gives a "legal" basis to the position of heirship to God mentioned in vs. 7.

Several scholars have detected an inner connection between the ideas of justification and adoptive sonship implied in Gal. 4.5. W. Grundmann appears to identify the two ideas when he asserts: "Was Paulus Rechtfertigung aus dem Glauben nennt . . . die dem Glaubenden zugesprochene Gerechtigkeit Gottes, das ist Einsetzung in den Sohnesstand, verbunden mit dem Loskauf vom Gesetz, mit der Befreiung von seinem den Sünder treffenden Fluch."<sup>1</sup> The differences in the two metaphors of justification and adoption mentioned above forbid the identification of the two ideas. Mussner puts the matter differently. He finds justification in the background of vs. 5a and then says of the verse, "Diesen Befreiung [from the law] hat aber als Heilsziel, wie der zweite ἵνα—Satz (V5b) erkennen lässt, die Sohnschaft der Glaubenden." He then proceeds to assert from Gal. 4.5:

Es geht also in der sog. Rechtfertigung nicht nur um die Befreiung aus der Herrschaft des Gesetzes, sondern positiv um die Einsetzung in die Sohnschaft. Die iustificatio impii ist also umfassen von dem viel grösseren Horizont, der υἱοθεσία heisst. Die Rechtfertigung führt zur Sohnschaft. Das hat auch zur Folge, dass das juristische Element in der pln. Rechtfertigungslehre . . . transponiert wird auf die Ebene des personalen Seins ('Sohn,' 'Erbe,' 'Freier'), ohne dass diese Ebene deshalb zur 'Metaphysik' würde.<sup>2</sup>

Gal. 4.5 cannot bear the weight of the argument placed on it by Mussner. It is true, from a logical point of view, that the metaphor υἱοθεσία presents a wider horizon than justification because it includes both a juridical act and the establishment of a personal relationship. It is also inconceivable that sonship could come into existence without justification. But Paul does not make these connections for us in Gal. 4.5, rather Mussner is theologizing at this point. Nevertheless, a certain inner connection between

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<sup>1</sup>W. Grundmann, "Geist der Sohnschaft," p. 179. Grundmann goes on to claim, "Sohnschaft beschreibt also den Stand der aus dem Glauben Gerechtfertigten als einen ihnen geschenkten und nicht selbst erworbenen Stand." But in what sense this is true he never specifies. Cf. Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 75. In his explanation of adoptive sonship in Gal. 4.5 Mussner is taking what he himself identifies as a position typical of Catholic theology over against the views of German Evangelical theology (p. 76).

justification and sonship may have existed in Paul's thought. In Gal. 3.24 Paul maintains, "The law became our pedagogue unto Christ in order that we might be justified by faith." He proceeds to say in vss. 25-26, "But since the coming of faith we are no longer under a pedagogue; for you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus through faith." We have already seen that Paul had a specific reason for introducing the believer sonship theme into Gal. 3.26. But the very fact that he inserts the expression "you are all sons of God through faith" at the point that we might have expected the words "you have all been justified by faith" to be reiterated from vs. 24, implies a possible close relation between justification by faith and sonship through faith, in Paul's mind.<sup>1</sup> Such a connection in thought would have been natural for a Jew like Paul because, as we have seen, divine sonship was often based on personal righteousness or virtue in contemporary Jewish thought (cf. Wis. 2.16, 18; 5.1-6; Sir. 4.1-10; Philo, Quaest. Gen., I, 92). On the basis of Gal. 3.24-26, it is possible that he understood an inherent connection to exist between justification and sonship, but it would be dangerous to press this point, even though one is able to formulate a logical connection between the two, as Mussner has done.<sup>2</sup>

Paul's description of the believer's sonship as adoptive in Gal. 4.5 probably has specific significance in relation to Christ's Sonship.<sup>3</sup> In vs. 4 Christ is depicted as the Son whom God sent into the world. Paul's use of υἱοθεσία in vs. 5 has the effect of differentiating the believer's sonship from that of Christ's. His Sonship appears to be direct, unmediated, and natural in contrast to the sonship experienced by Christians. This inference receives

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Venetz, "Christus anziehen," pp. 13-14 and Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup>Twisselmann, Gotteskindschaft, p. 62 describes justification and υἱοθεσία as "Parallelbegriffe," but, as we have suggested, they are only parallel to a point. υἱοθεσία, as a metaphor, comes closer to being parallel to the two metaphors of δικαιωθῆναι and καταλλαγῆναι in Rom. 5.9 and 10.

<sup>3</sup>Against the possibility of simply rendering υἱοθεσία as though it were the later appearing word υἱότης, see Moule, Phenomenon, p. 52. The fact that Gal. 4 talks about a transfer from slavery to sonship necessitates that υἱοθεσία be rendered "adoption" in Gal. 4.5. Cf. Hester, Inheritance, p. 59.



support from vs. 6 where Paul speaks of the role of the Spirit of the Son in the believer's filiation, as well as from Rom. 8.14-30, especially vs. 29, where Christ the Son of God is described as the image to which the other brethren are conformed. As is well-known, the author of the fourth Gospel distinguished between Christ's Sonship and that of his disciples through his exclusive application of υἱός to Christ and τέκνα to the disciples.<sup>1</sup> Paul accomplishes a similar differentiation for theological reasons through his use of υἱοθεσία for believers vis-à-vis the original pattern of Sonship as seen in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Sonship and the Spirit of The Son in Gal. 4.6

The more than juridical character of υἱοθεσία for Paul becomes clear in vss. 6-7. The ὅτι of vs. 6 has crucial importance for understanding the verse and Paul's intention in the argument. Two differing interpretations of the ὅτι are possible and are widely defended. One group of exegetes, following the lead of most of the Greek Fathers, take the ὅτι to be declarative "that you are sons."<sup>3</sup> This explanation requires that the ὅτι be dependent upon a verb like οἶδατε or δηλον which is to be understood. The second clause concerning the sending of the Spirit of the Son then confirms the Galatians' sonship or gives its source. This interpretation has the advantage of agreeing with Rom. 8.14-16 in making the Spirit the agent in confirming divine sonship, if not the source of sonship (ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας Rom. 8.15).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This matter has recently received special attention from Vellanickal, Divine Sonship in the Johannine Writings.

<sup>2</sup>Moule, Phenomenon, p. 52 says of Christ the πρωτότοκος in Rom. 8.29, "I believe that the distinction between the 'birthright' of the eldest and the only derivative status of the rest [of the sons] is clear."

<sup>3</sup>See Blank, Paulus, p. 276, Jeremias, Prayers, p. 65, n. 74; C.H. Giblin, In Hope of God's Glory. Pauline Theological Perspectives (1970), p. 77; Lagrange, Galates, pp. 103-104; J.A.T. Robinson, "The One Baptism as a Category of New Testament Soteriology," SJT 6 (1953), pp. 262-263; Moule, Idiom-Book, p. 147; and A. Duprez, "Note sur le Rôle de l'Esprit-Saint dans la Filiation du Chrétien. A Propos de Gal. 4, 6," RSR 52 (1964), pp. 421-431. Duprez lists others holding this view. See p. 422, n. 7.

<sup>4</sup>On this understanding of Rom. 8.14-16 see ibid., pp. 423-424; on 8.15 in particular see Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 396-397.

A second group of exegetes want to translate ὅτι in a causal sense,<sup>1</sup> thus avoiding any need for understanding a verb at the beginning of vs. 6. This gives the meaning, "because you are sons, God sent . . .," and makes the reception of the Spirit depend upon adoption. But this interpretation poses a number of difficulties. In the first place, the position of the ὅτι clause is unusual. Causal ὅτι occurs in the post-positive position on 397 occasions in the New Testament and only eleven or twelve times in the pre-positive position according to N. Turner.<sup>2</sup> Apart from Gal. 4.6, Paul only has one other instance of pre-positive causal ὅτι, if Turner is to be believed.<sup>3</sup> The position then of the ὅτι clause in Gal. 4.6, if taken as causal, is unusual in Paul, to say the least.<sup>4</sup> In the second place, the verb tenses of vs. 6 do not favor the causative rendering of ὅτι either. If Paul wished to say that the Spirit was sent because of sonship then γέγονατε would have made much better sense in the ὅτι clause. Thirdly, the shift from the second person in the ὅτι clause to the ἡμῶν in the following clause is also more difficult, if ὅτι is taken as causative.<sup>5</sup> Fourthly, the interpretation which causal ὅτι necessitates, runs counter to the thought of Rom. 8.15 (see above).<sup>Since</sup> the Spirit was received in the conversion-initiation experience, in what sense could or would Paul have said that the gift of the Spirit resulted <sup>from</sup> or was caused by sonship?<sup>6</sup> Mussner, who accepts the causative sense, recognizes

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<sup>1</sup>Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 169; Schlier, Galater, pp. 197-198; Burton, Galatians, pp. 221-222; Hermann, Kyrios, pp. 94-96; Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 117; and Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 274-275.

<sup>2</sup>J.H. Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek. Syntax. 3 (N. Turner) (1963), p. 345.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 345.

<sup>4</sup>To find an example of demonstrative ὅτι in the initial position we need look no further than Gal. 3.11.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Jeremias, Prayers, p. 65, n. 74. The alteration of ἡμῶν to ὑμῶν in D K L Ψ and other witnesses represents an attempt to smooth over the difficult ἡμῶν. In the context the ἡμῶν may indicate that Paul is quoting a fixed formula of some sort; however, cf. 1 Thess. 5.5.

<sup>6</sup>Dunn, Baptism, pp. 113-114 maintains that regardless of how ὅτι is translated, "the more plausible interpretation is that 4.6 refers to the gift of the Spirit at conversion--initiation whereby the objective fact of sonship accomplished by the coming . . . of



this problem and appeals to Blank for an explanation: "Der Empfang der υἱοθεσία schliesst sicher die Geistbegabung eo ipso mit ein, eins ist ohne das andere nicht zu denken."<sup>1</sup> He fails to note, however, that Blank translates the ὅτι with "dass" not "weil." Blank thinks that the causative translation, espoused by Mussner and others, fragments what was for Paul an essentially "innerlich zusammenhängt" conception of sonship and the gift of the Spirit into a logical progression.<sup>2</sup>

The argument tips decisively in favor of declarative ὅτι when the thought of Gal. 3-4 is taken into account.<sup>3</sup> Paul does not need to confirm the gift of the Spirit because he has already done this in Gal. 3.1-5. Instead he requires positive evidence for the Galatians' divine sonship in order to establish that they are already sons and heirs of God and no more slaves. This is the conclusion he wishes to come to in vs. 7: "ὥστε οὐκέτι εἰ δοῦλος ἀλλὰ υἱός· εἰ δὲ υἱός, καὶ κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ." As Duprez observes,

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the Son becomes the individual's personal possession in his subjective experience." Burton, Galatians, p. 221 ends up with a very convoluted explanation of vs. 6 because he insists on the causal translation of ὅτι. He asserts, among other things, "The sonship here spoken of being antecedent to and the grounds of the bestowal of the Spirit is not the full, achieved fact, nor the consciousness of a filial relation, but the first and objective state . . ." This interpretation renders the present tense of ἔστε with the past tense of ἐξαπέστειλεν incomprehensible. Burton urges a little later, "It is involved in this relation of sonship and the possession of the Spirit that from the consciousness of the latter one may infer the former, and it is doubtless to induce the Galatians to draw this inference . . . that this sentence was written." In a word, Burton now explains the verse in a way which fits with the declarative ὅτι not the causal ὅτι. But he immediately reaffirms the causal character of the ὅτι. Such is the muddle that one gets into in accepting the causal ὅτι and its logical consequence in a context which requires the declarative interpretation. Schlier, Galater, p. 200, in attempting to harmonize Rom. 8.14 with Gal. 4.6, speaks of a sonship of "being" connected with baptism and a sonship of "experience" connected with the Spirit. This explanation is no more convincing than Burton's because it presupposes a fragmented understanding of sonship on Paul's part.

<sup>1</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 275 quoting Blank, Paulus, p. 276. In agreement with Blank's statement see Duprez, "Filiation," p. 431.

<sup>2</sup>Blank, Paulus, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup>See especially Duprez, "Filiation," p. 424-431. Cf. also Moule, Idiom-Book, p. 147 and Burton, Galatians, p. 221. (See previous p. 344, n. 6.)

if the <sup>ε</sup>οτι of vs. 6 is taken as causative, then Paul "utiliserait au V. 6 comme preuve cela précisément qu'il entend conclure au v. 7."<sup>1</sup> Such a non sequitur seems highly unlikely. Rather Gal. 4.6 proves that the Galatians were sons not slaves by demonstrating their sonship through their possession of the Spirit of the Son which enabled them to cry to God, "Abba, Father." On the basis of Gal. 3.1-5 it is clear that they could not deny having received the Spirit. The wording of 4.6, however, may have in mind some specific occasion at which time they consciously acknowledged the Fatherhood of God on the basis of their reception of the Spirit.

The verb ἐξαποστῆλλειν in the main clause of vs. 6 is the same verb used for God's sending of his Son into the world in order to serve as the agent of his eschatological salvation. In vs. 6 Paul employs the verb to refer to God's sending of the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of believers. The verb, in conjunction with the context, once again suggests the idea of agency. The Spirit serves as the agent of God in effectively establishing and confirming the divine sonship of those who believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God (cf. Rom. 8.14-16).<sup>2</sup> But the Spirit is here called the Spirit of the Son. It is not to be distinguished from the Holy Spirit of God, but it is designated "the Spirit of the Son" because, as we suggested previously,<sup>3</sup> it represents the Son to the believer. The believer can only know the risen Christ through the Spirit and its works in his life. The believer enters into a real sonship relation with God through the work of the Spirit who reduplicates in the believer the Sonship experience of the one true Son.<sup>4</sup> How the Spirit accomplishes this task will become clearer in a moment, but meanwhile there is more to be said about the significance of the verb ἐξαποστῆλλειν. Its aorist form indicates that Paul is referring to a past event. The Spirit is not sent again each time the believer cries "Abba, Father," rather the Spirit is sent into the heart of the believer once. This can only mean that Paul is alluding to the

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<sup>1</sup>Duprez, "Filiation," p. 429.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. ibid., p. 430 and Schlier, Galater, p. 198.

<sup>3</sup>See supra, pp. 198-204.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Dunn, Jesus, p. 22 and Blank, Paulus, p. 278.



coming of the Spirit at the time of his readers' conversion and entrance into the faith (cf. 3.1-5),<sup>1</sup> though he includes himself in this experience through his use of the ἡμῶν. Thus Paul identifies the initial experience of the Spirit as the experience of the Spirit of God's Son.

God sends the Spirit of the Son into the hearts of believers. This is not unimportant. In Biblical thought in general, and in Paul in particular, the heart (καρδία) is the center of a man's being.<sup>2</sup> The heart is connected with thinking and reflection (1 Cor. 2.9; Rom. 1.21), and is also the source of emotions and desires, both good and bad (Rom. 1.24; Rom. 9.2; 10.1; 2 Cor. 7.3; Phil. 1.7). The heart is especially related to the will and to intentionality (1 Cor. 4.5; 7.37; 2 Cor. 9.7; Col. 4.8) and is the place where God and man encounter one another (Rom. 5.5; 8.27; 10.9-10; 1 Cor. 14.25; 2 Cor. 1.22; 2 Cor. 4.6; 1 Thess. 2.4). When the Spirit of the Son enters the heart of a man, it means that "the direction of the heart's intentionality is determined by Christ's Spirit."<sup>3</sup> The Spirit, who is the Spirit of the Son, brings a man into a real sonship relationship with God for the first time through indwelling his heart.

The objective proof of this new condition of sonship is the crying of the Spirit in the believer, "Abba, Father." The participle κρᾶζον refers to an action of the Spirit in Gal. 4.6. But in Rom. 8.15 it is the believer who cries (κράζομεν), "Abba, Father," in the Spirit. Although the word κράζειν may denote a forceful ejaculation, as that of the demons in the Gospels (cf. Mk. 3.11; 5.7; 9.26; Lk. 4.41; 9.39),<sup>4</sup> and therefore could refer to an ecstatic cry in the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 275; Dunn, Baptism, p. 113-114; and Marchel, Abba, pp. 178-179.

<sup>2</sup>On this see F. Baumgärtel and J. Behm, "καρδία," TDNT 3, pp. 605-613; Bultmann, Theology 1, pp. 220-227; Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 119-120; and Jewett, Anthropological Terms, pp. 304-333. Jewett provides a very helpful survey of research into the subject. He is particularly critical of Bultmann's "identification of καρδία as a variant of νοῦς" (Ridderbos follows Bultmann) because it obscures the difference between "traditional Hebraic terms depicting a psycho-somatic unity of man and the Hellenistic terms which implicitly deny such unity" (p. 312).

<sup>3</sup>Jewett, Anthropological Terms, p. 323.

<sup>4</sup>For the standard treatment of the word and its use see W. Grundmann, "κράζω. κτλ.," TDNT 3, pp. 898-903.

power of the Spirit,<sup>1</sup> Paul's use of it in Gal. 4.6 and Rom. 8.15 is more probably determined by its use with respect to prayers in the Septuagint, especially in the Psalms, where it denotes an earnest and faithful calling upon God in prayer (cf. Ps. 3.4; 17.6; 29.2; 54.16; 56.2; 87.2, etc.).<sup>2</sup> Paul seems to assume that all Christians cry "Abba, Father" through the Spirit. This argues against its being an ecstatic cry or a form of glossolalia. By identifying the "Abba" cry with the Spirit in Gal. 4.6, Paul probably wants to suggest that the Spirit alone, working in the heart of the believer, makes possible the genuine cry of the Christian to God as his Father. The logic of this is relatively straightforward. A man could not call on God as his Father in a true sense until he had first become a Christian. Since the Spirit was received at the time of conversion and initiation, Paul could justifiably say that the Spirit, entering a believer's heart, led to the person being able to call upon God as his Father. It was, as it were, the Spirit, crying to God as Father in the heart of the believer, which resulted in the prayer address to God as Father by the man himself.

The content of the cry to God, "Abba, Father," goes back to Jesus himself and derives from the form of address which he used for God.<sup>3</sup> The intimacy which this address implied between God and Jesus was unique in Judaism. Undoubtedly it was the unusual character of this form of address to God which led to the preservation of Abba in the traditions of the Church, even among those who could not speak Aramaic. Jesus may in fact have taught his immediate disciples to pray to God as Abba, and this may have been the original form of address of the Lord's prayer.<sup>4</sup> By it Jesus may have sought

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<sup>1</sup>This view is held by Oepke, Galater, p. 134, though he thinks Abba may have had a wider application; Schlier, Galater, pp. 198-199; Bonnard, Galates, p. 88; Mussner, Galaterbrief, pp. 275-276 (possibly); O. Kuss, Der Römerbrief: Übersetzt und Erklärt 2 (1959), p. 603; Dodd, Romans, p. 129; and Michel, Römer, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup>Grundmann, "κράζω," p. 903; Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 169; Marchel, Abba, p. 219, n. 12; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 399. Others have suggested that κράζειν, in conjunction with Abba, Father, indicates a public acclamation (cf. Rom. 9.27), e.g. Leenhardt, Romans, p. 214; G. Delling, Worship in the New Testament (1962), p. 71; Paulsen, Römer 8, pp. 88-96; and Käsemann, Römer, p. 218. Grundmann, "κράζω," p. 903 suggests this possibility as well for Gal. 4.6. Acclamation or proclamation as understood by Leenhardt, Grundmann, and Paulsen is not necessarily to be taken as unrelated to prayer, contra Käsemann.

<sup>3</sup>See supra, pp. 48ff.

<sup>4</sup>See supra, pp. 285ff.



to introduce his disciples into his own relation with God. Many scholars have suggested that the Abba of Gal. 4.6 and Rom. 8.15 reflects the continuation of the Abba address of the Lord's Prayer in the life of the non-Palestinian church.<sup>1</sup> This is a genuine possibility, but we lack the necessary evidence to establish it conclusively. "Abba, Father" may have had a wider currency in the prayer life and perhaps also the "liturgical" activity of the early church; we simply cannot say for certain.<sup>2</sup>

With respect to Gal. 4.6, it is probable that Paul had taught the Galatians to pray to God "Abba, Father" as a mark of their new sonship relation with God after their conversion. If vs. 6 is anything to go by, Paul taught that the Spirit of the Son entering a man's heart was essential, if a man were to address God as his personal Father. The Galatians had received the Spirit in their hearts and by it called upon God as their Father, using the words of the unique Son of God himself. This had the effect of confirming or demonstrating their real sonship relation with God. They had entered into the sonship relation of the Son of God whom God had sent into the world to make men sons of God. The reality of this new relation is underscored by vs. 9 where Paul reminds the Galatians that they now know God and are known by God. In conjunction with Gal. 4.1-7, this knowing of God and being known by God can refer to nothing but the new Father-son relation established by God with the Galatians.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Sonship and Heirship in Gal. 4.7

With vs. 7 Paul arrives at the conclusion of his thought in vss. 1-6 as the repetition of the terms δοῦλος, υἱός, and κληρονόμος, all of which are drawn from vss. 1-6, suggests. The statement in vs. 7 logically follows on the words of vs. 6b: God sent the Spirit

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Jeremias, Prayer, p. 65, n. 73; Grundmann, "Geist der Sohnschaft," p. 188; Seeberg, Der Katechismus, p. 243; Marchel, Abba, pp. 177-178; Cullmann, Christology, pp. 208-209; Oepke, Galater, p. 134; Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 163-164 (possibly); and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 400.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. G. Schrenk, "πατήρ," p. 1006.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 118; Betz, "Spirit," p. 151; and Twisselmann, Gotteskindschaft, p. 62.

of his Son into the Galatians' hearts enabling them to cry to God as their true Father; therefore, Paul infers (ὥστε), they are no longer slaves but sons, and if sons, also heirs through God. Several features of vs. 7 are worthy of particular notice. The change to the second person singular εἶ and the singular forms of the nouns δοῦλος, υἱός, and κληρονόμος are striking. By this device Paul apparently wishes to stress the relevance of what he is saying for each of his readers as individuals: each one of them is a son of God and therefore an heir.

The expression κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ is also of interest for two reasons. The κληρονόμος links vs. 7 with vs. 1 and thereby to 3.29. Paul established in 3.26-29 that his readers were heirs according to the promise given to Abraham through their relation with Christ. In 4.7 he makes a somewhat different point. They are sons of God and therefore the heirs of God. According to the Old Testament, Abraham and his descendants were to receive the inheritance of the land from God (Gen. 15.7; 28.4; Nu. 34.2; Dt. 30.5). Paul's view in both Gal. 3 and 4 is that the inheritance is by promise (3.15-19) and the heirs inherit because God has made them sons through adoption—a connection which does not seem to have been made in Jewish literature. Paul, however, does not specify the nature of the inheritance in vs. 7. As in Jewish thought where the inheritance came to have an eschatological character,<sup>1</sup> the Galatians are the heirs of God's eschatological salvation—what Paul calls the kingdom of God in Gal. 5.21—a transcendental reality. In contrast to normal Jewish thought, however, the inheritance came to have no connection with the land for Paul because, as W.D. Davies observes, Paul discovered the inheritance to be "in Christ."<sup>2</sup> The Christian is heir to the salvation blessings of God in Christ, though, as we shall see, Paul goes even further in Rom. 8.17 by identifying Christians as the fellow heirs of Christ.

The second reason that κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ is of interest is because of the somewhat unusual διὰ θεοῦ. The textual variants

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<sup>1</sup>W. Foerster, "κληρονόμος κτλ.," *TDNT* 3, pp. 779-780. He points out that the inheritance came to be associated with eternal life (Ps. Sol. 14.10), the coming aeon (4 Ez. 7.96; S. Bar. 44.13), or the glory of God.

<sup>2</sup>W.D. Davies, The Gospel and the Land (1974), p. 219.



associated with the phrase reveal the difficulty that this expression created in the minds of the various manuscript copyists.<sup>1</sup> διὰ θεοῦ is almost certainly the original reading because of the strength of the early witnesses favoring it (p<sup>46</sup>, X<sup>1</sup>, A, B, C), the difficulty of the reading compared to the other possibilities, and its ability to account for the other readings.<sup>2</sup> The words "through God" view God as the "Urheber der ganzen Heilsveranstaltung,"<sup>3</sup> and as he who makes the Galatians heirs and assures them of their inheritance.<sup>4</sup>

The Galatians are no longer slaves but sons and heirs of God. They have nothing to gain by undergoing circumcision and accepting the Jewish law. They have the blessing of Abraham through Christ, and as adopted sons of God, they are the heirs of God. Thus in vss. 8-11 Paul proceeds to point out that by altering their course they are in imminent danger of being re-enslaved. To turn to the weak and beggarly elements was in essence a renunciation of their status as free sons of God. Such an act was in Paul's mind tantamount to rendering null and void his missionary work among them.

Paul could only hope that the Galatians would accept the argument of Gal. 4.1-7 if they already knew something of their position as the sons of God through the saving act of the Son of God whom God had sent into the world. Paul did preach Christ, the salvation bearing Son of God, as part of his Gospel proclamation. Gal. 3.26 and 4.6 makes it almost certain that the Galatians already knew of their sonship to God, a knowledge which went back to Paul's original preaching and instruction among them. The conclusion reached in vs. 7 that they were the heirs of God through the saving

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<sup>1</sup>The variants include: θεοῦ, διὰ θεόν, διὰ χριστοῦ, διὰ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, θεοῦ διὰ χριστοῦ, θεοῦ διὰ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, διὰ θεοῦ ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, and even μὲν θεοῦ συγκληρονόμος δὲ χριστοῦ.

<sup>2</sup>See Metzger, Textual Commentary, pp. 595-596.

<sup>3</sup>Mussner, Galaterbrief, p. 277.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Burton, Galatians, p. 225, who mentions both these possibilities but favors the latter. It is unnecessary to limit Paul in this way in our opinion.

activity of God may have been a consequence drawn by Paul from his sonship teaching. It may have been put forward in the argument against the Judaizers to counter their claims that the inheritance was only to be had through a relationship to Abraham based on circumcision and through obedience to the law.<sup>1</sup> However this may be, the use of the divine sonship theme at a crucial point in his polemic with his opponents results from the fact that divine sonship, including the living relationship it implied with God as Father, was a fundamental expression of salvation for Paul. His understanding of sonship as originating in the gracious act of adoption by God and as resulting in a new relation with God as Father, through the work of the Spirit, gives sonship both a juridical and an existential quality. In other words, it unites two crucial aspects in Paul's understanding of soteriology: the unilateral saving act of God towards an individual man and the opening up of a new living relationship with God based on the act of God. Although it has a different content, it embraces in one theme the soteriological duality implied in Rom. 5.9, 10 where justification and reconciliation occur together. The work of the Spirit in sonship is absolutely crucial, but we may hold back on summarizing this theme until we have examined Rom. 8 and 9.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul's sonship conception as presented in Gal. 4.4-7 seems to stand in the background when he explains the allegory of Sarah and Hagar in 4.21-5.1. The children according to promise, those according to the Spirit, are the free sons who are to inherit (vss. 28-31). From Paul's point of view they can be none other than the children of God. Cf. Cerfaux, Christian, pp. 277-278; Jewett, Anthropological Terms, pp. 100-101; Burton, Galatians, pp. 267-268; and Twisselmann, Gotteskindschaft, p. 57.



## CHAPTER XI

### ROMANS AND PAUL'S USE OF THE BELIEVER SONSHIP IDEA

#### A. Introduction

The theme of divine sonship appears in chapters 8 and 9 of Romans, but a marked difference exists in its usage in the two chapters. In Rom. 9 the divine sonship idea first involves the conception of Israel's special privilege of adoption (vs. 4). Paul limits divine sonship to only a segment of physical Israel, however (vss. 6-8), before employing a quotation from Hosea which establishes that non-Jews have been called to divine sonship as well (vss. 24-26). In the thought of Rom. 9 sonship is hardly more than a sub-theme, but it indicates that Paul's own sonship conception is rooted in the Old Testament and post-Old Testament Jewish idea that the people of God are his sons. By contrast, Rom. 8 contains the apostle's most extensive exposition of the sonship theme. Rom. 8.14-17 is closely connected with the thought of Gal. 4.5-7, but the context in which it occurs is decidedly different, and the idea is explicated in greater detail. In Rom. 8.18-30 the place of sonship in the eschatological salvation to which God has destined his elect is given considerable emphasis because the final state of adoptive sonship is said to be the object of Christian hope (vs. 23).

As in Gal. 3.26-4.7, the sonship theme in both Rom. 8 and 9 does not stand in isolation from the argument of the letter. For this reason it will prove helpful to set out the main structure of Romans, and by so doing we should gain further insight into the place of sonship in the thought of Paul. This will be followed by an exegesis of the relevant material in Rom. 8 and 9. But before examining the structure of the argument in Romans, it is necessary

to discuss briefly the purpose and character of Romans.

#### B. The Purpose and Character of Romans

The uncertainty surrounding the situation in Rome and Paul's purpose in writing Romans exceeds by far the problems associated with Galatians. With regard to this, K.P. Donfried speaks of "a Romans debate in process which is far from complete."<sup>1</sup> In the case of Romans, it is not even certain what can be described as the major positions in the debate because so many scholars have offered very different solutions to the problem of the origin and purpose of Romans.<sup>2</sup> Donfried has attempted to limit the field by arguing, from a methodological point of view, "Any study of Romans should proceed on the initial assumption that this letter was written by Paul to deal with a concrete situation in Rome."<sup>3</sup> He bases this statement on the fact that all the authentic Pauline letters were "addressed to the specific situations of the churches or persons involved."<sup>4</sup> This assumption, however, ignores one very crucial difference between Romans and other Pauline writings. Romans was not addressed to a church established by Paul (or a colleague as in the case of the church at Colossae), and therefore he had no direct claim to authority over them. For this reason Donfried's presupposition must be rejected, but this does not mean that Romans was not directed to a specific situation in Rome. If

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<sup>1</sup>K.P. Donfried, "Introduction," The Romans Debate (1977), p. xi. This book consists of a collection of essays by nine scholars concerning the question of the purpose and audience of Romans. Donfried chose the essays, all but one of which had been published previously, to give the reader some idea of the diversity and conflicting opinions regarding the problem of the "situation in life" of Romans.

<sup>2</sup>Apart from The Romans Debate, see W.S. Campbell, "Why Did Paul Write Romans?" ET 85 (1973-74), pp. 264-269 for a recent survey of the various solutions proposed. He discusses contributions under five headings: "Romans as a Letter of Self-Introduction," "Romans as an Assertion of Paul's Apostolic Authority," "Romans as a Letter to Jerusalem," "Romans as a Circular Letter," and "Romans as a Letter to Rome." This should give the reader some idea of the diversity of opinion on the life situation of Romans. An extensive bibliography on this issue may be found in Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, pp. 814-815, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup>K.P. Donfried, "False Presuppositions in the Study of Romans," Romans Debate, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



chapter 16 is part of the original letter, and we think it is,<sup>1</sup> then Paul had a number of contacts in the Roman church to whom he extended personal greetings. Very possibly many of them were Jewish Christians whom Paul had met after they had been driven out of Rome by the decree of Claudius in A.D. 49 and who had then returned after Claudius' death. Paul may even have converted some of them to Christianity. Thus it is entirely possible that he had intimate knowledge of the church situation in Rome through his friends and acquaintances.

On the surface of it, Paul wrote Romans to prepare the way for his future visit to Rome (cf. 1.1-13; 15.14ff.). He also wanted to have the Roman Christians share, through prayer, in the Jerusalem collection (cf. 15.30-33).<sup>2</sup> But these goals would not have required the main body of the letter (1.16-15.13) to have been written. When Rom. 1.8-17 is studied with care, an important reason for the writing of 1.16-15.21 comes into focus. Paul wished to see the Roman Christians, who were largely unknown to him, to impart a spiritual gift to them (Rom. 1.11). He desired to have some fruit among them as he had had among other Gentiles (vs. 13); thus he was eager to preach the Gospel to them (vs. 15). It is this last point which functions as Paul's springboard into the main part of the letter. He begins in vss. 16-17 with the statement: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God to salvation for all who believe, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. For the righteousness of God is being revealed in it from faith to faith, as it is written, 'The righteous by faith shall live.'" These two verses are programmatic for the contents of the whole main body of the letter. But in light of their connection with vs. 15, an important fact emerges. Rom. 1.16-15.13 represents an initial attempt by Paul to "preach" the Gospel to those in Rome in order to have some fruit among them. As N.A. Dahl has noted, "In Greco-Roman antiquity, a written message was regarded as a substitute for personal presence

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<sup>1</sup>See K.P. Donfried, "A Short Note on Romans 16," Romans Debate, pp. 50-60; Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 9-13; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 5-11; and Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 314-320.

<sup>2</sup>On this latter point see especially A.J.M. Wedderburn, "The Purpose and Occasion of Romans Again," ET 90 (1978-79), pp. 137-141.

and oral communication." Thus he goes on to describe Romans as an example of "preaching the Gospel in writing."<sup>1</sup>

Other motives for the writing of Romans seem to lie just below the surface. The emphasis on the Jews and Gentiles within the salvation scheme of God, is perhaps attributable to a conflict between Jews and Gentiles within the Christian community at Rome. Some suggest that the strong and the weak of 14.1ff. are to be identified as liberal-minded Gentiles and conservative-minded Jews respectively.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of Rom. 11.13-24, among other passages, it is possible that the Gentiles felt a certain sense of superiority over Jewish Christians and that Paul wished to bring them into line. The strong appeals of Paul regarding the Jews and his own feelings towards them (Rom. 9.1-3; 10.1-2; 11. 1-2; 11.14) perhaps suggest that some felt or claimed that Paul had no interest in the Jewish nation or possibly had rejected Judaism altogether. Paul was perhaps accused of antinomianism by some (3.9; 6.1). It is difficult to be certain about these matters from only hearing Paul's end of the conversation.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, it seems probable to us that Paul has attempted to present the Gospel of God to the Christians in Rome in order to explain the place of Jews and Gentiles within God's salvation purposes. By so doing he wished to ease the tensions between Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome and to spell out his own understanding of the place of the Jewish people and perhaps the law in the salvation activity of God.

### C. The Structure of the Argument of Romans

The structure, just as the "situation in life" of Romans,

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<sup>1</sup>N.A. Dahl, Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission (1977), p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. Campbell, "Romans," p. 268. P.S. Minear, The Obedience of Faith: The Purpose of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (1971), pp. 8-17 sees the weak as primarily converted Jews and the strong as Gentiles or "liberated" Jews. But he goes too far when he finds a further distinction between the weak who condemn the strong and the weak who do not and the strong who despise the weak and those who do not. The attempt to relate almost every part of the main body of the epistle to all, or to one or the other of these groups, or another group he designates doubters, ignores the limitations of the evidence available.

<sup>3</sup>Donfried, "False Presuppositions," p. 126, is correct, in our view, when he argues that the so-called diatribe style does not disprove that Romans was directed to specific issues in the Roman church.



has received considerable attention from scholars without anything like a consensus being achieved. The conclusion of the letter, 15.14-16.23 (27), causes no difficulties. Similarly the paraenetic section beginning in 12.1 and running to 15.13 presents little difficulty because this material constitutes a thematic unity concerned with the practical and ethical ramifications of the Gospel. Paul normally included paraenesis in his letters and grounded it in so-called "indicative" statements concerning the Gospel. Rom. 12.1-15.13, in conjunction with Rom. 1-11, corresponds to this model.

The real trouble for the exegete comes in the section 1.16-11.36 which follows the salutation and body introduction (1.1-15). Few would deny that 9.1-11.36 forms a unit dealing with Israel's position in God's salvation plan, but its conceptual relationship to what precedes is debated. C.H. Dodd, among others, claims that it is a mere digression or a secondary argument in Romans,<sup>1</sup> while B. Noack thinks that it is the main point of the letter and that much of what precedes is in some senses secondary.<sup>2</sup> Neither of these extremes is to be accepted. Rom. 9-11, in all probability, was not only demanded by the situation in Rome, and by the practical experience of Paul as well, but it was also a natural outgrowth of Paul's explication of the Gospel in chapters 1-8. We have already treated the purpose of Paul in writing Romans. It is apparent that the nature of his own ministry as well as the wider experience of the early church must have posed for Jewish Christians especially, but also for Gentiles, the problem of why Israel had not accepted her Messiah.<sup>3</sup> Several features in Rom. 1-8 look forward to and, to

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<sup>1</sup>Dodd, Romans, pp. 148-150. He maintains that the "immediate sequel to 8.31-39" is 12.1ff., and that "chapters 9-11 form a compact and continuous whole," which can be read satisfactorily without reference to the rest of the epistle. Dodd sees it as a sermon inserted into the text of Romans to clear up the problems left by 3.1-9.

<sup>2</sup>B. Noack, "Current and Backwater in the Epistle to the Romans," ST 19 (1965), pp. 154-156. He especially designates chapters 4-8 as a "side issue" in comparison to 9-11.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. U. Wilckens, Rechtfertigung als Freiheit (1974), pp. 168-169, who views Romans as an apology for the Pauline Gospel, an opinion with which we have considerable sympathy. He thinks that in Rom. 6.1ff. Paul turns to the complex of objections raised by Judaizers against justification without the law. Wilckens then claims that Rom. 9-11 treats the second fundamental objection of Judaizers against Paul's Gospel, the problem of what has become of God's chosen people.

a certain extent, necessitate the discussion in Rom. 9-11. The contrast in 2.26-29 between the true Jew who is circumcised in his heart and the outward appearing Jew who is only a Jew in his flesh by virtue of circumcision is closely related to Rom. 9-11. Within the argument of Rom. 3.1-9, the position of the Jewish nation before God is raised, further paving the way for the discussion of Rom. 9-11.<sup>1</sup> Rom. 4.9ff. with its discussion of Abraham and his seed who are righteous by faith, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, also points forward to the argument of Rom. 9-11,<sup>2</sup> particularly chapter 9. E. Dinkler has suggested a more immediate connection between Rom. 9-11 and what precedes it. In Rom. 8.28-30, Paul introduces the theme of God's predestination and elective call, but according to Dinkler, Paul does not specify whom God foreknew and predestined in vss. 28-30.<sup>3</sup> He asserts, "Paul wrestles with this question in chapters 9-11."<sup>4</sup> Dinkler is right in seeing a

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<sup>1</sup>U. Luz, "Zum Aufbau von Röm. 1-8," TZ 25 (1969), p. 175 maintains that in Rom. 1.18-4.25 Paul systematically contrasts the righteousness of God with the unrighteousness of men. He proceeds to assert: "Röm. 3, 1-9 ist in diesem Zusammenhang als Exkurs zu beurteilen, dessen Thema in Röm. 9-11 wieder aufgenommen wird." He later says of 6.1ff.: "Jetzt hat er [Paul] Zeit für vorher offengebliebene Fragen: für die Frage nach der Indifferenz des sittlichen Handelns (Röm. 6, 1ff.), für die Frage nach dem Sinn des Gesetzes (3, 31, vgl. 7, 7ff.; 8, 3ff.), für die Frage nach der Treue Gottes gegenüber Israel (9-11)." Cf. J. Dupont, "Le Problème de la Structure Littéraire de l'Épître aux Romains," RB 62 (1955), pp. 383-393.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. A. Feuillet, "Le Règne de la Mort et le Règne de la Vie (Rom. V, 12-21)," RB 77 (1970), p. 505. R. Scroggs, "Paul as Rhetorician. Two Homilies in Romans 1-11," Jews, Greeks and Gentiles. Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity (1976), pp. 270-298, maintains that Rom. 1.16-4.25 and 9.1-11.36 form what was originally a single homily. He notes, "Chapter 9 picks up both development and scriptural support where chapter 4 ended" (p. 275). This is an interesting proposal, and he is certainly right in seeing a connection between Rom. 1-4 and 9-11. Whether Rom. 1-4 and 9-11 formed a single homily is another matter. It is possible but far from proven by Scroggs. His explanation for the separating of chapters 9-11 from 1-4 by a second homily of completely different character is not entirely convincing (pp. 288-289).

<sup>3</sup>E. Dinkler, "The Historical and the Eschatological Israel in Romans Chapters 9-11: A Contribution to the Problem of Predestination and Individual Responsibility," JR 36 (1956), pp. 113-114.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 114. For a criticism of Dinkler's view concerning "eschatological Israel" in Rom. 9-11, which seems to have colored his understanding of Rom. 8.28-30, see infra., p. 365, n. 2.



connection between Rom. 8.28-30 and Rom. 9-11, but it is not the one he thinks. Those whom God foreknew and predestined in Rom. 8.28-30 are obviously Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles. Nevertheless, vs. 28, in particular, implicitly raises the fundamental issue at stake in Rom. 9-11: if all things work together for good for those whom God calls, what of Israel? She was called by God and granted a variety of special privileges (Rom. 9.4-5), but the people of Israel did not turn to the Gospel. Had the word of God failed (Rom. 9.6)? What good was God working for Israel through her failure to respond to the Gospel? These are the problems which Paul seeks to solve in Rom. 9-11, and they are implicit in his confident assertion in Rom. 8.28 as soon as Israel's divine call is remembered. The fact that in Rom. 11 Paul attempts to show the good which God was working for both Jews and Gentiles in Israel's temporary exclusion from the salvation blessings of God suggests that Paul perhaps intended a connection between Rom. 8.28 and chapters 9-11.

Since the sonship theme in Rom. 9-11 is limited to chapter 9, where it plays only a minor role in the actual argument, it is unnecessary for our purposes to make a detailed analysis of the thought progression in chapters 9-11. Instead the development of Rom. 9.1-29 will be treated in our discussion of sonship in Rom. 9.

The problem of the structure of Rom. 1.16-8.39 is especially disputed. Some think 1.16 (or 18)-5.21 forms one integrated unit, while 6.1-8.39 (or even 11.36) forms a second.<sup>1</sup> Others agree that there are two sections in Rom. 1-8 dealing with differing themes, but find the break between 4.25 and 5.1.<sup>2</sup> A. Feuillet has championed the view that a major division occurs at 5.12 so that 5.1-11 goes with 1.18-4.25 and 5.12-21 with chapters 6-8.<sup>3</sup> In contradistinction

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. Sanday and Headlam, Romans, pp. xlvii-1; J. Dupont, "Problème de la Structure," pp. 366-382; and X. Léon-Dufour, "Situation Littéraire de Rom. V," RSR 51 (1963), pp. 83-95. Wilckens, Rechtfertigung, p. 168 seems to hold this opinion as well.

<sup>2</sup>This view is widely held. See for example Dodd, Romans, p. 71; Käsemann, Römer, pp. 121-122; Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 12-15, Michel, Römer, pp. 43-47; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 101; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 103, 252-254.

<sup>3</sup>A. Feuillet, "Le Plan Salvifique de Dieu d'Après l'Épître aux Romains," RB 57 (1950), pp. 338-387 saw three major divisions in Rom. 1-8; 1.18-5.11; 5.12-7.6; and 7.7-8.39. In 1959 Feuillet seems to have modified his earlier understanding on the basis of the

to all those who find two sections with different themes in Rom. 1-8, U. Luz claims that Rom. 1-8 cannot be divided thematically. According to him, the letter develops around the single theme of the "Gerechtigkeit des Gottes."<sup>1</sup> Luz, however, ignores the differences in thought and content in Rom. 1-4 and 6-8. In Rom. 1-4 Paul is concerned with man's alienation from the righteous God, through sin, his just condemnation, and his justification by faith through the gracious act of God. Chapters 6-8 and, as we shall see, chapter 5 as well, principally treat the new life of the man who has been justified and the problems arising from his new life in Christ.

The proposal of Feuillet that 5.12 is the dividing point between the section on justification and the one on the new life which results from it is particularly attractive because it is based on an important linguistic consideration. He thinks that the Habakkuk quotation in Rom. 1.17 was utilized in conformity with Paul's intention for organizing the epistle.<sup>2</sup> The words  $\delta$  δίκαιος  $\epsilon$ κ  $\pi$ ίστεως from Rom. 1.17 correspond to 1.18-5.11, according to Feuillet, and ζήσεται relates to 5.12-8.39. He grounds this claim in the fact that δίκαιος, δικαιοῶ, δικαιοσύνη, πίστις, and πιστεύω occur with regularity in 1.18-5.11 but seldom in 5.12-8.39, while on the other hand, ζῶω, ζωή, ἀποθνήσκω, and θάνατος are confined almost exclusively to 5.12-8.39. If word statistics alone were considered, Feuillet's contention would probably merit assent. But when the content of 5.1-11 is examined, Paul has gone considerably beyond the theme of sin and justification by faith to the theme of

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Habakkuk citation in Rom. 1.17. Thus in "La Citation d'Habacuc II.4 et les Huit Premiers Chapitres de l'Épître aux Romains," NTS 6 (1959-1960), pp. 55-56 he discusses the bipartite division of Romans with the division occurring at Rom. 5.12. He tries to salvage his earlier work by finding three antitheses based on his earlier division of Rom. 1-8. Now see his essay "Règne de la Mort," pp. 501-515. Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 132-133, 139-140 also adopts the view that the main division in Rom. 1-8 occurs at 5.12.

<sup>1</sup>Luz, "Aufbau," pp. 165-181.

<sup>2</sup>Feuillet, "Citation d'Habacuc," pp. 55ff. This position is in no way unique to Feuillet, though he is the only one to use it in proving the main division of Rom. 1-8 is located between 5.11 and 5.12. See for example Michel, Römer, p. 43 and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 102.



new life in Christ, even though the term ζωή only occurs once, and then it is in relation to Christ (5.10). The introductory words of chapter 5, "δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως," seem to draw together the previous discussion, while the words which follow, "εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν κτλ." seem to take up the consequences of the new status of justification. The shift to the first person plural in 5.1 also marks a decisive change from the third person argumentative form which characterizes the previous discussion.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, as Dahl noted some years ago, Rom. 5.1ff. is closely related to chapter 8 in both vocabulary and thought.<sup>2</sup> It should therefore be connected with what follows rather than what precedes. These observations have the further effect of rendering untenable the claim that the major division in Rom. 1-8 occurs at 6.1.<sup>3</sup>

Because the believer sonship theme occurs in Rom. 8, part of the second main section of Rom. 1-8, it is unnecessary to follow the argument of Rom. 1.16-4.25. It is sufficient to note that believer sonship must be seen as a consequence of God's gracious act of justification. The nature of the argument in Rom. 5-8 also makes it unnecessary to examine the line of thought in chapters 5-7 in detail. Rom. 5-8 does not proceed by a single unbroken line of argument but through a series of interconnecting ideas by which Paul explores the one theme of new life in Christ and its meaning. The various subsections of chapters 5-7 are fairly clear and may simply be listed along with their primary thrusts:

- 1) 5.1-11: Those who are justified have peace with God and hope for the future.
- 2) 5.12-21: The gift of life comes through the obedience of Christ as death came through the disobedience of Adam.
- 3) 6.1-14: Believers are dead to sin and alive to God

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 138 who takes a similar position. Käsemann, Römer, p. 122 rejects the connection of 5.1 to what precedes on different grounds: "Unser Verständnis von c.4 als Schriftbeweis erlaubt nicht, 5, 1-11 noch zum vorigen Teil zu ziehen." See also the references supra, p. 359, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Dahl, "Romans 5," pp. 37-39. Cf. Scroggs, "Paul as Rhetorician," pp. 285-286.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Michel, Römer, p. 176 and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 138.

in Christ.

- 4) 6.15-23: The former slaves of sin have become the slaves of righteousness and of God.
- 5) 7.1-6: Believers are freed from the law as a constraining force.
- 6) 7.7-12: The condemnation resulting from the law was due to sin, not the law itself.
- 7) 7.13-24a: The law of sin is still at work in the life of the believer.

These subsections are logically connected together as Paul moves the whole of Rom. 5-7 forward through a series of rhetorical questions placed at the beginning of each new section. In each case the questions are raised by the previous section. The one exception to this is 5.12-21, but the  $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron$  of 5.12 probably should be understood in its normal sense as having a back reference,<sup>2</sup> and thereby it serves to join 5.12 with what precedes. When Paul comes to chapter 8 he begins with an inferential  $\alpha\rho\alpha$  which, as we have noted previously,<sup>3</sup> links Rom. 8.1 with 7.6. In 8.2 Paul reintroduces the Spirit into the discussion from 7.6 and 5.5.

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<sup>1</sup>If this device is intentional, as it seems to be, it may mean that 7.24b introduces a new section, but this poses a difficulty since the  $\alpha\rho\alpha$  of 8.1 refers back to 7.6, so that 7.7-25 has the appearance of an excursus. It is true, nevertheless, that 8.1 provides assurance for the man asking the question in 7.24a. Scroggs, "Paul as Rhetorician," pp. 282-283 suggests that each section of 5.1-8.39 concludes with a refrain or formula that either speaks explicitly of life and death or implies the theme. He differs from us in that he thinks 6.1-11 and 6.12-23 are the subsections in chapter 6, and he considers 7.7-25a a single unit. While his proposal is very interesting, the frequency with which words relating to life and death occur in ch. 5-8 (almost 70 times) makes it not surprising that they should appear at the close of sections as well. But the primary problem with his contention that death and life were intentionally used in concluding formulas comes in chapter 6. It seems more likely to us that the rhetorical question of vs. 15 introduces the new section than that vs. 11 ends the previous section. It also strains the section conclusion at 8.29-30 to get the death and life antithesis out of it, and Scroggs, like many others, must excise 7.25b from the text to get a neat section conclusion at 7.24-25a.

<sup>2</sup>Michel, Römer, p. 186; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 159; Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 110; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup>See supra, pp. 133.



The theme of the Spirit in the life of the believer then dominates much of what follows in chapter 8, but it is also into this context that Paul introduces the theme of the divine sonship of believers. For the apostle divine sonship is rooted in the gift of the Spirit. The exact relationship of these two themes, that of the Spirit and of sonship, in the argument of Rom. 8 may be seen best in the context of our exegesis of the sonship material in Rom. 8. However, at this point several general comments may be made about the place of believer sonship in Romans.

The divine sonship theme is interjected at the end of the discussion regarding new life in Christ in Rom. 5-8. It actually occurs in 8.12-30 which leads up to Paul's paeon regarding the profound love of God, an idea which itself cannot be distanced too far from the sonship conception in vss. 12-30. The way in which Paul introduces it at the end of his discussion in Rom. 5-8 has the effect of making it appear as a keystone for the preceding discussion, especially in light of 8.18-25 and 29-30 where sonship is portrayed as one of the final goals of salvation. Sonship epitomizes the new life which the Christian experiences through the Spirit (8.1-16). It is the ultimate result of the believer's justification (5.1, 9), and it constitutes the unique relation vis-à-vis God which results from reconciliation with him (5.10). Although Rom. 9 represents the beginning of an entirely new section, Paul makes use of the divine sonship idea on three separate occasions. In the process he reveals that for him divine sonship always played a part in the salvation plan of God.

Because the use of believer sonship in Rom. 9 indicates the historical antecedent for its use in Rom. 8, we shall begin by examining Rom. 9.

#### D. The Divine Sonship of the People of God in Rom. 9

The complexity of Rom. 9-11 precludes our discussing these chapters in detail, and besides, as was noted above, the sonship theme appears only in chapter 9 where it plays a very minor role. The last three verses of Rom. 9 (vss. 30-32) seem to go with chapter 10. The remainder of the chapter subdivides into three

main paragraphs: vss. 1-5; vss. 6-13; and vss. 14-29. Interestingly each of these paragraphs contains a reference to divine sonship, but each instance has its own peculiar significance.

Rom. 9.1-5 functions as the introduction to the third main division of the epistle, chapters 9-11. In vs. 1-3 Paul expresses his deep-seated grief over the failure of his kinsmen according to the flesh to believe in Christ, the Messiah of Israel. This sets the stage for what follows in Rom. 9.6-11.36 because it reveals Paul's earnest desire for Israel's salvation and shows the tremendous difficulty created for him by Israel's general failure to respond to the Gospel as God's message of salvation. At issue was whether God was true to his promises or not. In vss. 4-5 the apostle enumerates in four relative clauses a series of privileges granted to Israel by God. The first relative clause, οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλῖται, while identifying Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh from vs. 3, has a comprehensive character about it.<sup>1</sup> Israel was the honorific name granted to Jacob by God as a blessing (Gen. 32.22-32). In the post-Old Testament period it became the preferred self-designation of the Jewish people emphasizing their status as the chosen people of God.<sup>2</sup> For Paul it denotes the same thing because in Rom. 11.1 when he raises the question of whether God had rejected his people he responds by answering, "Never, for I also am an Israelite." As W. Gutbrod notes, "This makes sense only if, as an Ἰσραηλίτης, he is a member of God's people."<sup>3</sup>

The all-encompassing privilege of being an Israelite included a variety of other prerogatives for Paul. In Rom. 9.4b he links six of these boons together: ἡ υἱοθεσία, ἡ δόξα, αἱ διαθήκαι, ἡ νομοθεσία, ἡ λατρεία and αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι. In light of the infrequent use made of divine sonship in both Old Testament and intertestamental Judaism (Wisdom of Solomon 11-19 is the sole

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<sup>1</sup>W. Gutbrod, "Ἰσραήλ κτλ.," TDNT 3, pp. 386-387 and Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, p. 460.

<sup>2</sup>M. Rese, "Die Vorzüge Israels in Röm. 9, 4f. und Eph. 2, 12: Exegetische Anmerkungen zum Thema Kirche und Israel," TZ 31 (1975), p. 215 and K.G. Kuhn, "Ἰσραήλ κτλ.," TDNT 3, p. 360.

<sup>3</sup>Gutbrod, "Ἰσραήλ," p. 386.



exception), it is somewhat surprising that Paul listed υἱοθεσία as a significant privilege of being an Israelite. In fact he gives it a position of prominence by placing it first in the list of specific blessings granted to the people of God.<sup>1</sup> This may reflect Paul's own conception of the importance of the Father-son relation between God and his people, an importance which Paul only came to see after his conversion to belief in Christ. In the discussion of the term υἱοθεσία in Gal. 4.5, we concluded that Paul understood Israel's divine sonship in the Old Testament in terms of υἱοθεσία, adoptive sonship, because this emphasized the completely sovereign action of God by which Israel became a son.

The other prerogatives of Israel are not of great significance to our discussion here. It suffices to say that the whole of vss. 4 and 5 help explain the great tragedy Paul saw in the general failure of Israel to come to terms with God's salvation in Christ. But it also posed an acute practical and theological problem for Paul and all other Christians: Had the word of God failed? Could God be trusted, if his promises to the people of Israel remained unfulfilled? Paul's solution to this difficulty began with his recognition that a process of election and grace had always operated in the life of Israel. He claims in Rom. 9.6b that not all those from Israel are Israel. Thus Paul makes a distinction between mere physical descent from Jacob (Israel) and a more exclusive sense of being Israel which transcends the inclusive category of physical descent. Paul does not intend a reference to the Gentiles as the true Israel, or even as a part of the true Israel, either here or anywhere else.<sup>2</sup> The οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ of vs. 6b refers to a group within physical Israel (πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ) who have been chosen to share in the salvation

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<sup>1</sup>D.W.B. Robinson, "The Priesthood of Paul in the Gospel of Hope," Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology (1974), p. 234 calls the "sonship" of Rom. 9.4 "the chief prerogative of Israel among the nations," but he fails to note that no one except Paul ever seems to have made this identification.

<sup>2</sup>See J. Munck, Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11 (1967), pp. 34-36 and P. Richardson, Israel in the Church (1969), pp. 70-158. Dinkler, "Eschatological Israel," pp. 114-117 and n. 22, p. 126 argues that the distinction Paul seeks to make in Rom. 9.6-13 concerns "empirical-historical Israel" and "eschatological Israel," the latter of which includes both Jews and Gentiles to whom the promises of God were given. His distinction between the two Israels forces him to posit a "clear contradiction" between Rom. 9.6-13 and Rom. 11.1-32 since in the

granted in Christ from the outset. But this cannot be construed as an attempt to reinterpret completely Israel's special place before God because, as Rom. 11 shows, Paul believed that "all" Israel would be saved, though presumably not every individual Israelite.

Paul clarifies and expands upon the distinction proposed in vs. 6b by his statement in vss. 7-8. He introduces the idea of Abrahamic descent in vss. 7-8 because the principle of divine selection was active among Abraham's descendants from the beginning. In vs. 7 the apostle states the principle of exclusion as being that "not all are children of Abraham because they are the seed of Abraham." To ground this assertion, he cites Gen. 21.12. According to the narrative of Gen. 21, when Sarah demanded that Hagar and her son Ishmael be sent away, so that Isaac would be Abraham's sole heir, God supported her request to Abraham by informing him that his descendants were to be named through Isaac (Gen. 21.12).<sup>1</sup> Although Abraham had two physical sons at the time (he was later to have six more—Gen. 25.2), only one was chosen to continue the line, receiving the promises of God. In vs. 8 Paul explains the meaning of the Gen. 21.12 quotation (τοῦτ' ἔστιν) in the following words: "οὐ τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκὸς ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας λογίζεται εἰς σπέρμα." The appearance of the expression τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ is unexpected. Nowhere in the Genesis narrative is there any connection between Abrahamic descent and

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latter passage the promises are said to have been given to historical Israel (11.1-10). Dinkler blames the contradiction on "Paul's complex interest" in wishing to maintain an "eschatological Israel" which embraces Jews and Gentiles, while not denying the original prerogatives of "historical Israel." It seems more probable to us that the contradiction between Rom. 9 and 11 arises as a result of Dinkler's "complex interest" in maintaining the conception of "eschatological Israel" in Rom. 9.6-13. Nothing in Rom. 9.6-13 suggests that Paul had Gentiles in mind and 9.1-5 argues very strongly against this view. The evidence adduced by Dinkler from outside Rom. 9-11 is inadequate to prove his contention. What Paul seeks to do is demonstrate that throughout the history of Israel a process of selection based on divine election has been operating. For Paul this helps to explain why not all Israel turned to the Gospel.

<sup>1</sup>The κληθήσεται of the Gen. 21.12 quotation approaches the meaning of "be." See Arndt-Gingrich, "καλέω," p. 400.



divine sonship. The immediate reason for the introduction of the words "children of God" in vs. 8 appears to be to contrast with the expression "the children of the flesh" (τέκνα τῆς σαρκός). But the shadow of Rom. 9.4 hangs over the verse. Divine sonship was a privilege granted to Israel, but in a more exclusive sense, it was not established by mere physical descent from Abraham. Divine sonship was based on God's decision, the principle of divine selection, which operated in the case of Isaac and Ishmael and all the subsequent progeny of Abraham.<sup>1</sup> From the perspective of this examination, the interesting factor in vs. 8 is the way in which Paul interjects the divine sonship idea into the text. He makes no effort to explain it, and in fact he uses it to contrast with "children of the flesh" and perhaps to balance vs. 8b with vs. 7a, even though it does not really seem to fit. This suggests that Paul assumed that divine sonship, a concept drawn from the Old Testament, was a fundamental category for understanding the relation of the elect to God. Vs. 8c, "but the children of promise are considered seed," then balances with vs. 7b and is itself grounded by vs. 9 which confirms that Isaac was indeed the son of Abraham through divine promise.

In vss. 10-13 Paul proceeds to show that God's elective love was operative in the birth of Isaac's sons, Jacob and Esau. He does not make it explicit, but the story of Jacob and Esau affirms the thought of vss. 7-8 because it was only one of the two grandsons of Abraham, Jacob, who was called to inherit the promises made to Abraham.<sup>2</sup> Paul argues in vss. 14-18 for the sovereignty of God in election and the bestowing of mercy, and he defends God against those who would accuse him of arbitrariness in vss. 19-21. According to vss. 22-24, God has a sovereign right to the choices

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, p. 475 on the relation between υἱοθεσία in Rom. 9.4 and τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ in vs. 8. He thinks the difference between sonship in vss. 4 and 8 is comparable to the idea of the "selective connotation" of the "Israel within Israel." For a somewhat different view see D.W.B. Robinson, "The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9-11," Reformed Theological Review 26 (1967), pp. 84-85 and Schoenberg, "Adoptive Sonship," pp. 265-266 (see supra, p. 339, n. 4 who distinguishes between an objective privilege and a subjective appropriation of it.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Munck, Christ and Israel, p. 37.

which he makes that cannot be called into question.

Paul takes up the idea of the call of God which has brought both Jews and Gentiles into the new elect community of the saved in vs. 24. In support of this he employs a series of Old Testament quotations, the first two of which come from Hosea and are intended apparently to establish that it was God's will to include Gentiles among the elect. First Paul cites Hos. 2.25 (LXX) in which God says: "I will call those who are not my people, 'my people,' and her who was not loved, 'my beloved.'" This he follows with Hos. 2.1 (LXX): "And it will be in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called sons of the living God."<sup>1</sup> Here for the third time in chapter 9 the sonship designation occurs. It is always difficult to determine how much emphasis to place on an Old Testament citation by Paul, but the quoting of Hos. 2.1 (LXX) seems especially significant in the context of chapter 9. In effect, Paul maintains from Scripture that it was always God's will to include the Gentiles in the privilege of divine sonship, a privilege which originally belonged exclusively to Israel. Thus as in vs. 4 where υἱοθεσία was given a position of prominence among the prerogatives of Israel, in vss. 24-26 divine sonship becomes an inclusive expression for the salvation gift of God granted to the Gentiles.<sup>2</sup> As we shall see, this idea was prepared for by chapter 8. Vss. 27-29 then establish the election and selection process which occurred among the Jewish people, rounding off Paul's thought in 9.6-29.

#### E. The Context of Sonship in Rom. 8

As with Rom. 5-7, Rom. 8 contains several different themes which center around the main theme of chapters 5-8, the new life of those who are justified in Christ Jesus through faith. But, apart from the theme of life, the various themes of Rom. 8.1-30 are unified by a second element, the emphasis on the Spirit who brings life and ministers life to the believer. The Spirit is mentioned on eighteen different occasions in 8.1-30, giving Rom. 8

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<sup>1</sup>On the problem of whether ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ . . . ἐκεῖ in vs. 26 refers to a specific place compare ibid., pp. 72-73 with Professor Cranfield, Romans 2, pp. 500-501.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Schweizer, "υἱός," p. 391 who remarks, "The use of the quotation Hos. 2:1 in Rom. 9:26 shows already that the divine sonship awaited at the eschaton is fulfilled for Paul in the community of Christ."



the distinction of containing more references to the Spirit and his work than any other chapter in the whole of the Pauline corpus. By contrast, the Spirit is only mentioned on eleven occasions in 1 Cor. 12, the chapter with the next most frequent usage of the term Spirit. But it is not merely that the term Spirit occurs with regularity in Rom. 8.1-30; these verses also provide detailed exposition of the role of the Spirit in the life of the Christian and in the saving activity of God. Thus if life is the overarching theme of Rom. 5-8, the Spirit is the overarching theme of Rom. 8.1-30. Narrowing our focus still further, when we come to Rom. 8.12-30 yet another dominant theme emerges within the concentric circles formed by the themes of life (Rom. 5-8) and the Spirit (Rom. 8.1-30), that of believer sonship. This becomes a third concentric circle which seems to stand at the very heart of what Paul says in Rom. 5-8, for the theme of sonship embraces both the present and the future of God's salvation. It is both a present reality and a hoped for element of future salvation; it is of the essence of what Paul understands life to be in chapters 5-8.

The main part of Rom. 8, vss. 1-30, divides into four main paragraphs:<sup>1</sup> 8.1-11, 12-17, 18-25, 25-30. The divisions between the paragraphs, however, especially between the first and the second and the second and the third, are somewhat fluid. Within these paragraphs we are treated to what P. von der Osten-Sacken calls a "Beispiel paulinischer Soteriologie" in which Christology, pneumatology, and eschatology play important roles in relationship to each other.<sup>2</sup> But behind it all stands God who has acted decisively (Rom. 8.3, 28-30) to save his elect.

It has previously been noted that Rom. 8.1 actually takes up again the thought of 7.1-6 in general, and vs. 6 in particular. Paul writes in Rom. 7.6, "And now we have been freed from the law, having died to that by which we formerly were held fast, so that we might be slaves in the newness of the Spirit and not the oldness of

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<sup>1</sup>The paragraph 8.31-39, while connected with the thought of vss. 28-30, seems to function as a conclusion to the whole of chapters 5-8, as well. See especially Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 309-319.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., esp. pp. 319-321.

the letter." This provides the basis for Paul's inference in 8.1: "Consequently now there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus." The believer is free from the condemnation of the law

← even though sin still works in him, attempting to dominate his actions through the flesh (7.14-25), because the saving activity of the Spirit, who is the source of life for the believer, frees him from the power of sin and death which works through the law. As we have seen in the discussion of Christ's Sonship in Rom. 8.3-4,<sup>1</sup> Paul establishes the thought of 7.1-6 and 8.1-2 through his Theological (in the proper sense of the term) and Christological statement in vss. 3-4. But Paul does not forget the tension at work in the Christian's life between the law of God which controls his intellect and the law of sin which works in his flesh (7.25).<sup>2</sup> His solution involves the presence and control of the Spirit who brings life (8.2). The Christian is not left to his own devices in combatting the law of sin and death which war against the good intentions of the mind through the flesh (7.23, 25; 8.2). The Spirit frees from the law of sin and death, but not from sin and death, for the believer still sins in spite of his good resolve and ultimately must face death, but not without hope in the resurrection. Thus in 8.5ff. Paul contrasts life lived according to the flesh with life lived according to the Spirit. By so doing he expounds 8.4 (the γάρ of 8.5 connects vss. 5ff. with vs. 4) which suggests that part of the fulfillment of the righteous demand of the law includes living according to the dictates of the Spirit and not according to the leadings of the flesh.<sup>3</sup> Vss. 5ff. do not seem to be concerned precisely with contrasting pre-Christian and Christian existence as such, but with the possibilities which face every person who becomes a believer:<sup>4</sup> he must either live by the

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<sup>1</sup>See supra, pp. 135ff.

<sup>2</sup>See supra, pp. 132ff.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 385 and Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 243-244.

<sup>4</sup>This understanding is suggested by what Paul says in 7.25b as well as 8.12-13. Cf. Kuss, Römerbrief 2, pp. 596-597 and J.D.G. Dunn, "Rom. 7,14-25 in the Theology of Paul," TZ 31 (1975), p. 263 who maintains: "in 8,4ff. Paul does not contrast believer with unbeliever; rather he confronts the believer with both sides of the paradox, both sides of his nature as a believer. If he lives solely on the level of the flesh, solely as flesh, then his ultimate destiny is death (vv. 6.ff., Gal. 6, 8a). But if he allows his walk to be determined by the Spirit, then his ultimate destiny is life—life in death, life through death, life beyond death (vv. 6, 10f., Gal. 6, 8b)."



Spirit and so come to life and peace through overcoming the flesh by the Spirit, or he will continue to live under the domination of the flesh which will result inevitably in death, not life (vss. 5-6, cf. vss. 12-13). In the life of the Christian, even as in the life of the non-Christian, the strivings of the flesh are at enmity with God because they can never be subjected to the law of God (vs. 7, cf. vs. 8). But the Christian does not live in the power of the flesh; he lives under the power of the Spirit since the Spirit of God lives in him (vs. 9).<sup>1</sup> In fact there is no such person as a Christian, apart from the Spirit who is the Spirit of Christ, and he is the Spirit of God (vs. 9b). The resultant condition of the person who has Christ in him is that even though the physical body is doomed to death on account of sin,<sup>2</sup> which affects believers and non-believers, the Spirit which he has received means life on account of the righteousness which comes from God (vs. 10). The implication of vs. 10 becomes somewhat clearer in vs. 11, as does the role of the Spirit in bringing life. The reference here to the resurrection of Jesus shows the direction in which Paul's thought is moving. He knows that the believer must experience death on account of sin (vs. 10b), but the Spirit means life in death for the Christian. God will give life to the mortal body of the Christian through his indwelling Spirit. There are few other references to the Spirit's activity in the resurrection of believers (cf. Gal. 6.8), but it is probable that this is what Paul refers to here.<sup>3</sup> Thus in vss. 1-11 Paul has moved from the present experience of the believer with the Spirit, in opposition to the flesh, to the future role of the Spirit in raising the Christian to life in the

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<sup>1</sup>In vs. 9 Paul turns directly to his readers to apply what he has been saying as the use of the second person plurals indicate. He continues to use the second person in vss. 10ff.

<sup>2</sup>With Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 389 we agree that the words διὰ ἁμαρτίαν make it difficult to understand the τὸ μὲν ὥμα clause as a result of the indwelling of Christ and therefore as a reference to the effects of baptism, since in 6.2, 11 it is death to sin, not because of sin. Cf. Dunn, "Rom. 7, 14-25," pp. 263-264 and Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 200, 209. The concessive force of the μὲν should thus be emphasized.

<sup>3</sup>This presupposes that the reading διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ πνεύματος is correct. On this see the convincing arguments of Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 391-392. Cf. also Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 248-249; H.W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer (1966<sup>2</sup>), p. 140; and Lietzmann, Römer, p. 80 against e.g.

resurrection. In other words, Paul has shown that the Spirit works in both the present existence of the Christian and his future existence to minister life where death works.

As Paul links the Spirit to both the present and the future life of the believer in Rom. 8.1-11, he defines both the present and future life which comes from the Spirit in terms of divine sonship in Rom. 8.12-30.

#### F. The Present Experience of Sonship: Rom. 8.12-17

##### 1. Rom. 8.12-13

The thought progression of Rom. 8.12-17 has caused problems for exegetes because the relationship of vs. 13 to vs. 14 has often been thought difficult. O. Kuss has observed, "Wie sich die Gedankenreihe, VV. 14-17 an VV. 12.13 anschliesst, ist nicht auf den ersten Blick deutlich."<sup>1</sup> And O. Michel has said, "Der Übergang von V 13 zu V 14 ist logisch nicht ganz einfach."<sup>2</sup> The ὅρα οὖν of vs. 12 indicates that Paul is drawing an inference from what precedes (ὅρα), while making a transition (οὖν) to a new thought.<sup>3</sup> The ὅρα probably embraces the whole of 8.1-11. The point which Paul wishes to make was implicit in the previous discussion. Christians are morally bound not to live under the corrupting influence of the flesh; they are obliged (ὀφείλεται) to resist the flesh. The reason is clear: living according to the flesh, even for the person who has been baptized and introduced into the community of faith, will lead to death—not mere physical death but final and total death (vs. 13a). On the other hand, the ceaseless attempt to put to death the deeds of the body, by the power of the Spirit will lead to life (vs. 13b).<sup>4</sup> The way of the Spirit does not free the believer from moral effort, but it is only by the Spirit that he may achieve

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Schweizer, "πνεῦμα," p. 422 who prefers τὸ ἐνοικοῦν αὐτοῦ πνεῦμα as the lectio difficilior. Specifically against Schweizer's claim see Käsemann, Römer, pp. 214-215.

<sup>1</sup>Kuss, Römerbrief 2, p. 599. <sup>2</sup>Michel, Römer, p. 259.

<sup>3</sup>Arndt-Gingrich, "ὅρα," p. 103, sect. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Paul says in Rom 6.6: "Our old man has been crucified, in order that the body of sin might be done away with so that we might no longer be slaves to sin." In typically Pauline fashion Rom. 8.12-13 suggests that what was accomplished in principle in baptism must



any success in the never ending struggle against the flesh.

C.H. Dodd has argued that vss. 12-13 "would naturally form an introduction to a section dealing with Christian ethics in practice."<sup>1</sup> He goes on to say, "But Paul remembers that there is much more that should be said of life in the Spirit, on the purely religious plane."<sup>2</sup> Dodd finds the true sequel to vss. 12-13 in chapters 12-15.<sup>3</sup> This conception of Dodd ignores the connection which Paul makes between vss. 13 and 14. Vs. 14 does not simply take up a totally unrelated thought, at least not in the mind of Paul. He joins vs. 14 to vs. 13 with a γάρ, and thus vs. 14 must be viewed as a continuation of the thought of vs. 13 or perhaps an explanation of vs. 13 or some part of it.<sup>4</sup> In other words Dodd is wrong to isolate vss. 14ff. from vss. 12-13. We shall return to the relationship of vss. 13 and 14 later, but first we must mention the views of H. Paulsen. Unlike Dodd, he takes vss. 12-17 as a unity, but then he goes on to connect this material with chapters 12ff., as Dodd has done with 8.12-13.<sup>5</sup> He describes vss. 12-17 as a transition to the paraenesis of chapters 12-16. He maintains:

Die Digression in den Versen 18ff vertieft die Verse 12-17; diese Weiterführung ist für Paulus innerhalb von Röm 8 deshalb erforderlich . . . Dennoch markiert von der Sache her das ὅρα οὖν des V. 12 den Einsatz der Paränese und deutet den Umschlag von Indikativ zum Imperativ an; Röm 12-16 wird in diesen Versen vorbereitet.<sup>6</sup>

Apart from the problem of whether chapter 16 should be included in the paraenetic section of Romans, the question is whether Rom. 8.12-17 was intentionally formulated to introduce the paraenetic material in Rom. 12ff. Neither Paulsen nor Dodd gives a convincing explanation of why the paraenesis should be introduced

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be accomplished in practice through the daily act of will by the believer in the power of the Spirit. It is the theme "become what you are."

<sup>1</sup>Dodd, Romans, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>4</sup>This connection between vss. 13 and 14 has been noted by several scholars including Kuss, Römerbrief 2, pp. 600-601; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 251; K. Stalder, Werk des Geistes, pp. 469-470; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 393, 395-396; and Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 134-135.

<sup>5</sup>Paulsen, Römer 8, pp. 81-83.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

three and a half chapters before the matter is to be taken up. Dodd's view, that Paul started his paraenesis and then "remembered" more should be said about life and the Spirit, makes Paul look like a stream-of-consciousness writer. Such a conception simply does not fit with the careful thought development evidenced in Romans. In the case of Paulsen, no attempt is ever made to explain how 8.12-17 can serve a "Überleitende Funktion" three and a half chapters before the transition actually occurs.

It seems much more probable that 8.12-17 arose quite naturally from what had gone before. Paul wished to express a consequence of his previous discussion, and this implicitly had paraenetic significance. The fact that no imperatives occur in 8.12-17 shows, however, that Paul is not yet interested in explicit paraenesis. He is still concerned with the theme of life, for it is this theme which dominates the thought of vss. 12-13 and provides the connection with vss. 14ff.

In vs. 13 Paul poses two possible scenarios for the Christian: continue living by the flesh and die or put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit and live. Having used the terms ζωή and ζῆν throughout not only chapter 8.1-13, but also chapters 5-7, Paul moves to explain what he means by life for the Christian. Thus, though the terms ζωή and ζῆν occur more than twenty times in 5.1-8.13, the final instance being the ζήσεσθε of vs. 13b, they do not appear at all in 8.14-30 precisely because Paul is trying to give substance to these terms.<sup>1</sup> This view is supported by the fact that in all probability the γάρ of vs. 14 indicates the transition to the explanation of vs. 13b. An obvious connection exists between the thought of the words πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε in vs. 13b and ὅσοι πνεύματι θεοῦ ἔχονται in vs. 14a, so that it is legitimate to see the latter words as explanatory of the former words.<sup>2</sup> But Paul's real purpose in vss. 14ff. appear to be to elucidate the

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<sup>1</sup>The future form of ζήσεσθε and its parallelism to μέλλετε ἀποθνήσκειν suggests that "will live" refers to the final salvation of the individual, to eternal life.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Michel, *Römer*, p. 259; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, p. 250; and Professor Cranfield, *Romans* 1, p. 395. Professor Cranfield also points out that the way in which vs. 14 takes up only the positive side of vs. 13 indicates "that v. 14 is to be connected only with 13b and not v. 13a as well."



ζήσεσθε at the end of vs. 13b. Two interrelated factors bear this out. First the ζήσεσθε of vs. 13b corresponds to οὗτοι υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν of vs. 14b, if, as seems to be the case, vss. 13b and 14 are parallel in structure: "if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body" = "for as many as are led by the Spirit;" and "you will live" = "you are sons of God." Although a correspondence exists between vs. 13b and vs. 14b, the statement in vs. 14b only takes on significance in light of vss. 15ff. Thus the meaning of "you will live" only becomes clear through Paul's explication of sonship and its character in vss. 14-30.<sup>1</sup> The way in which sonship bears on the meaning of "you will live" can only become clear through the exegesis of vss. 14-30.

## 2. Rom. 8.14

The theme of believer sonship is first introduced in Romans by the statement in Rom. 8.14 which is intended to help clarify the meaning of vs. 13b. Paul makes the identification, "As many as (οὗτοι) are led by the Spirit, these are the Sons of God." The problem of whether the οὗτοι of vs. 14 should be understood as exclusive or inclusive has long been discussed by exegetes. Although in practical terms it makes very little difference which way it is understood, in a technical sense it probably should be rendered in an inclusive way because Paul is not concerned here to limit sonship to those who are led by the Spirit (though he undoubtedly thought this was true), rather he wishes to make the point that "all who are led by the Spirit" are included in sonship.

The "leading of the Spirit" mentioned in vs. 14 poses the question: in what sense did Paul think the Spirit led Christians? The connection we have discovered between vss. 13b and 14 suggests very strongly that Paul refers to an ethical dimension in which the Spirit directs the Christian in putting to death the immoral deeds associated with the flesh or body. The ethical orientation

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 139 who says, "Man wird deshalb als Thema des ganzen Abschnittes Röm. 8, 14-30 formulieren können: Die vom Geist bestimmten Göttersöhne sind Miterben Christi."

of πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται is borne out by Gal. 5.16ff. In Gal. 5.18 Paul says to the Galatians: "If you are led by the Spirit (πνεύματι ἄγεσθε), you are not under the law." In the context, being led by the Spirit is equivalent to "living by the Spirit and not carrying out the desires of the flesh" (Gal. 5.16). Michel suggests "being led by the Spirit" in Rom. 8.14 has an "ekstatisch" sound and refers to the "power of encouragement" (Macht des Antriebes) coming from the Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not the controlling and directing by the Spirit can properly be described as ecstatic, Paul did believe that the Spirit impelled Christians towards righteous and obedient behavior against the natural human instinct to live according to the flesh (cf. Rom. 8.1-13). Thus, in the words of W. Pfister, Rom. 8.14 has a "paränetische Ausrichtung";<sup>2</sup> however, the paraenetic orientation of vs. 14 is implicit, not explicit. Paul does not call his readers to be led by the Spirit, rather he tells them the significance of being led by the Spirit: to be led by the Spirit into the new righteousness (cf. vs. 10) is a mark of the sons of God. By means of vs. 14a, Paul connects the sonship discussion of vss. 14ff. not only with vs. 13b, but with 8.1-12 where he emphasizes the role of the Spirit in the life which the Christian lives. Nevertheless, it was natural for Paul to link the obedience of Christians, which results from their being led by the Spirit with their position as sons of God because, as Phil. 2.13-15 shows quite clearly, the apostle saw divine sonship as entailing ethical implications.

The paraenetic orientation of vss. 12-14 has caused several scholars to explain the whole of vss. 14-17 in ethical terms as well, thereby interpreting the sonship discussion of vss. 14-17 primarily in terms of the obedience of the sons of God. O. Michel thinks that both vss. 12 and 13 "betonen die Notwendigkeit, sich dem Gesetz des Geistes und des Lebens (8,2) unterzuordnen."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Michel, Römer, pp. 259-260. Cf. Käsemann, Römer, p. 216 who maintains the phrase "led by the Spirit" stems from enthusiastic usage on the basis of 1 Cor. 12.2.

<sup>2</sup>W. Pfister, Das Leben im Geist nach Paulus. Der Geist als Anfang und Vollendung des christlichen Lebens (1963), p. 76.

<sup>3</sup>Michel, Römer, p. 257.



He then proceeds to assert:

Die Pflicht zum Gehorsam, die aus dem Gesetz des Geistes und des Lebens entsteht, kann nur dann richtig verstanden werden, wenn man das neue Gesetz als Ausdruck der Sohnschaft und nicht der Knechtschaft auffasst. In diesem Sinn haben V14-17 die Aufgabe, den neuen Gehorsam als den Gehorsam des Kindes und des Erben Gottes zu beschreiben.

He is followed in this interpretation by W. Pfister who uses it to maintain the unity of vss. 12-17.<sup>2</sup>

Although the human sons of God may be identified by the fact that they are led by the Spirit of God into a new life of purity and obedience, sonship is not introduced into the discussion of Rom. 8.12-17 on account of its ethical dimension. The explication of the obedience of sonship is not the point of vss. 14-17.<sup>3</sup> Rather sonship is mentioned because it is a present reality for the Christian which points to and anticipates his future. Vss. 15-16 concern the present nature of sonship and what it means to be a son, but the actual argument pursued by Paul moves from vs. 14 to vs. 17 since Paul wishes to explicate his assertion "You will live"

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>2</sup>Pfister, Leben im Geist, pp. 70-71.

<sup>3</sup>Following the lead of K. Barth, A Shorter Commentary on Romans (1959), pp. 95-96, Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 401 maintains, "Verse 15 . . . harks back with its confident positive assertion, ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, to the fundamental indicatives of vv. 1-11 which are the context and presupposition of vv. 12ff, and gives to the obligation τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ κατὰ πνεῦμα ζῆν, which was implied but never expressed in v. 12, its final and definitive expression in the relative clause ἐν ᾧ κρᾶζομεν Ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ. This then is what it means to live after the Spirit, to mortify by the Spirit the deeds of the body, and to be led by the Spirit of God—simply to be enabled by the same Spirit to cry, 'Abba, Father'. . . . All that must be said about the Christian's obedience has been already said in principle when this has been said. Nothing more is required of us than that we should cry to the one true God 'Abba, Father' with full sincerity and full seriousness. That this necessarily includes seeking with all our heart to be and think and say and do what is well-pleasing to Him and to avoid all that displeases Him, should go without saying." Cf. idem, A Commentary on Romans 12-13 (1965), p. 2. While this represents a powerful exposition of the ethical implications of the Father-son relation discussed in Rom. 8.14-16, it is doubtful that Paul himself intended to say so much in vs. 15b. The ethical side of sonship is much more clearly implied in vs. 14 than it is in vs. 15b. The connections which Professor Cranfield makes between vss. 1-11 and vs. 12, and vs. 15b may equally well be made for vss. 1-11 and vs. 12, and vs. 14.

(understood as life after death) in vs. 13b, a theme already introduced in vs. 11. Consequently, vss. 15-16 are not part of the main thought. They have a certain parenthetical quality,<sup>1</sup> as Paul attempts to give substance to the existing sonship relation of his readers (and himself) with God. The way in which vss. 13b, 14, and 17 connect together will be shown later.

### 3. Rom. 8.15

Paul relates the sonship theme introduced in vs. 14 to his readers in vs. 15 by confirming that they are sons of God. He tells them: "You did not receive a Spirit of slavery leading you back into fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption in which we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" Paul does not wish to imply that a "Spirit of slavery" actually exists which might have been given; rather he formulates πνεῦμα δουλείας on the model of πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας. His point is that when the Romans were converted, they did not receive a Spirit who enslaved them, reintroducing fear, but they received the Spirit who brought adoption. Paul contrasts slavery to the law and the freedom of sonship in Gal. 4.1-11 and 4.21-5.1. Given the relation of Rom. 8.15 to Gal. 4.5-6, this section of Galatians may have come to his mind when formulating vs. 15a. But one need not look so far away to understand the thought behind vs. 15a and the "Spirit of slavery leading again to fear." Paul ended chapter 7 with the paradoxical statement, "I myself serve (δουλεύω) the law of God with my mind, but the law of sin with my flesh." Such a situation might well result in the Christian returning to the fear of divine wrath in the judgment (cf. Rom. 1.18) and leaving him with no hope that he would "be saved from the body of death" (Rom 7.24). The Spirit which Christians receive at conversion does not return them to those fears which characterized their pre-Christian life because it is the Spirit of adoption, which enables the believer to relate to God as a son and to call upon God as his Father, not with

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, Römer, p. 217 asserts, "15-16 sind nicht (gegen Lagrange) eine Parenthese, die sich (Lietzmann) an Zweifelnde wendet, vielmehr Beweis für 14." That vss. 15-16 serve as evidence for vs. 14 does not necessarily contradict the claim that they have a parenthetical quality, as Käsemann thinks. We understand vss. 15-16 as parenthetical because the actual argument moves from vs. 14 to vs. 17. Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 163 and Ridderbos, Paul, p. 201.



fear, but with confidence.<sup>1</sup>

One of the important points we maintained in relationship to Gal. 4.6-7 is confirmed by Rom. 8.15: It is the Spirit himself who effects the sonship of the Christian. Apart from the Spirit, sonship does not exist. Not all would agree that this is the meaning of ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας in vs. 15. Several scholars have argued that the πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας in vs. 15 cannot be understood as the Spirit who effects adoption because in vs. 23 Paul says, "We ourselves groan in ourselves υἱοθεσίαν ἀπεκδεχόμενοι, the redemption of our bodies." Thus they reason that the Spirit of adoption, which the Christian now has, does not actually effect the adoption, but anticipates it.<sup>2</sup> This interpretation, while seeking to do justice to vs. 23, has its own set of problems. In vss. 14, 16, and 17 sonship is treated as a present reality (note the present tense verbs of vss. 14 and 16), as it is in Gal. 4.6-7. In the thought of vss. 14-17, it is because sonship is an existing state that it is able to serve as a guarantee of the future inheritance which is then portrayed as glory (vs. 17). If sonship is a present reality for the Christian, then adoption must in some sense have already taken place. Vs. 15, read without vs. 23, clearly implies that the Spirit works adoption and therefore sonship in the believer.<sup>3</sup> How then is the tension between vss. 14-17 and vs. 23 to be resolved?

P. Benoit overcomes the problem by adopting the reading p<sup>46vid</sup>, D, G, 614, Ambrosiaster, Ephraem, Ambrose, Pelagius and a few others who omit υἱοθεσίαν from Rom. 8.23.<sup>4</sup> The principle of lectio difficili-

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<sup>1</sup>Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 163 observes with regard to vs. 15: "The contrast is not so much between those who look upon God as master, tyrant, or judge, and those who approach him as Father with the confidence of children, as between those who have no hope for the future, and those who can confidently look forward to life and glory." To the extent that this is intended in vs. 15, vs. 15 furthers the thought of vs. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 163; B.N. Kaye, "'To the Romans and Others' Revisited," NT 18 (1976), p. 59; and Jervell, Imago Dei, p. 279.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 135; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 397; Kuss, Römerbrief 2, p. 601; and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 252.

<sup>4</sup>P. Benoit, "We too groan inwardly . . ." (Romans 8:23)," Jesus and the Gospel 2 (1974), pp. 40ff.

or and the dominance of υἱοθεσία in the textual tradition clearly argue against this view, in spite of Benoit's claim that υἱοθεσία was placed into the text by someone who did not feel that the deliverance of the body was a worthy object of the "passionate expectation described by the Apostle."<sup>1</sup> In reaction to P. Benoit, J. Swetnam has offered an explanation which seeks to preserve the difficult reading υἱοθεσίαν in vs. 23, while lessening the apparent tension between vs. 23 and vs. 15.<sup>2</sup> He claims the participle ἀπεκδεχόμενοι, of which υἱοθεσίαν is the object, should be understood not as "await eagerly" but as "arrive at by inference."<sup>3</sup> He cites as evidence for this rendering two second century writers. He then maintains, "'adoptive sonship' is something which is at once arrived at by inference . . . even though already existing, and which in turn serves as the basis for further inference ('as the redemption of our body') of something which is not yet existing."<sup>4</sup> This explanation fails to carry conviction on several grounds. If Swetnam's rendering of vs. 23b were correct, we would have expected some form of connecting word between υἱοθεσίαν and τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν κτλ., to indicate that the latter was an inference from the former. Instead τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν appears to be in apposition to υἱοθεσίαν and to explain it. More importantly, Swetnam's translation of ἀπεκδεχόμενοι, when applied to vss. 19 and 25, does not make particularly good sense. "For the longing of creation arrives by inference at the revelation of the sons of God" as Swetnam renders vs. 19,<sup>5</sup> leaves completely unexplained what it means to say that the creation "infers" the revelation of the sons of God. Certainly no basis for the inference is given in the context. On the other hand, "eagerly awaits" makes very good sense in the context. In the case of vs. 25, it is not altogether obvious that "arriving at hope for that which we do not look upon by inference from endurance"<sup>6</sup> is a better or even as good a translation as the traditional one. (Cf.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> J. Swetnam, "On Romans 8, 23 and the 'Expectation of Sonship,'" Biblica 48 (1967), pp. 102-108.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 106ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 108

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 108.



also 1 Cor. 1.7 and Phil. 3.20 where Swetnam's rendering of ἀπεκδέχεσθαι does not seem appropriate.)

The best explanation of the tension between vss. 15 and 23 is to see them as a typical example of the Pauline tension between the salvation already experienced and its completion in the future, "the already and the not yet."<sup>1</sup> Just as justification may be said to have already come to the believer (Rom. 5.1, 9; cf. Gal. 2.16, 3.7-9), Paul also speaks of the hope of righteousness as future (Gal. 5.5), and so also with adoptive sonship.<sup>2</sup> Sonship exists in the present because of the adoption effected by the Spirit, but it will only attain its final form in the resurrection when the adoption already experienced inwardly will culminate in the adoption that includes the redemption of the body.<sup>3</sup> As Käsemann observes with regard to vss. 14-17 and vs. 23: "So liegt auch kein wirklicher Widerspruch vor, weil PIs die Heilsgabe nie als unanfechtbaren Besitz versteht. Immer charakterisiert er sie dialektisch bald präsentisch, bald futurisch, um ihre Realität mit ihrer irdischen Gefährdung auszugleichen."<sup>4</sup>

The ἐλάβετε of vs. 15 stresses that the "Spirit of adoption" was received at some point in the past. This cannot refer to anything other than the coming of the Spirit at the time of conversion. It was this experience which made believers to be adopted sons of God because the Spirit, which they received, was the Spirit of God's Son (cf. Gal. 4.6 and Rom. 8.9) who represented the resurrected Christ to them and enabled Paul to speak of Christ indwelling them (cf. Rom. 8.10 and Gal. 2.20). K. Stalder seeks to deny that the

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<sup>1</sup>On this theme in Paul see Cullmann, Salvation in History, pp. 248-268 and Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 308-318.

<sup>2</sup>For other examples of this phenomenon in Paul see ibid., pp. 308-310.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 227-228; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 252; Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, p. 310; and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 412-413, 419. Professor Cranfield maintains that the tension between vs. 23 and vss. 14-16 is to be resolved by the phrase "the revelation of the sons of God" in vs. 19. He asserts: "We are already sons of God, but our sonship is not yet manifest. We have been adopted, but our adoption has yet to be publicly proclaimed. υἱοθεσία here [in vs. 23] denotes the final manifestation of our adoption, our revelation as sons of God."

<sup>4</sup>Käsemann, Römer, p. 227.

Spirit establishes the believer's sonship. Instead, he argues that the Spirit is "das Kennzeichen und der Erweis unserer in Christus begründeten Gotteskindshaft."<sup>1</sup> He rests his assertion on three props: 1) Vs. 14 does not demand that the Spirit be seen as establishing sonship; 2) Gal. 4.6 forbids such an interpretation; and 3) vss. 15-17 demand another explanation, namely, how the work of the Spirit is characterizing (kennzeichnend) for sonship.<sup>2</sup> These arguments are not nearly strong enough to overturn the clear implication of vs. 15 that the Spirit, received at the time of conversion, establishes the adoptive sonship of believers. Although Stalder may be correct in saying that vs. 14 does not "demand" that the Spirit be the source of sonship, the verse certainly implies that a close connection exists between the Spirit and sonship. Dunn goes so far as to say, "Unless the reception of the Spirit [in vs. 15] is the reception of sonship Paul could not have written v. 14."<sup>3</sup> Stalder does not make clear why Gal. 4.6 forbids interpreting the Spirit as the source of sonship, but it is presumably because he takes the  $\delta\tau\iota$  of vs. 6 as causal. As we have shown in our discussion of Gal. 4.6, the causal meaning of  $\delta\tau\iota$  is improbable for a variety of reasons. The real basis of Stalder's view, however, is "dass . . . die Sohnschaft nicht primär in einer menschlichen Haltung oder Stimmung besteht, sondern aus einer göttlichen Tat hervorgeht und so auch schon in Geltung steht, wenn der Mensch noch nicht davon Kenntnis genommen hat."<sup>4</sup> Such a conception seems to presuppose neat stages in conversion whereby a man first becomes a Christian and therefore a son of God, whether he knows it or not, and then later receives the Spirit. But, as we have suggested before, Paul does not seem

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<sup>1</sup>Stalder, Werk des Geistes, p. 479. Cf. Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>Stalder, Werk des Geistes, pp. 478-479.

<sup>3</sup>Dunn, Baptism, p. 149.

<sup>4</sup>Stalder, Werk des Geistes, p. 483. He goes on to say: "Zu einer menschlichen Bewegung wird die Sohnschaft erst durch den Heiligen Geist, der der Geist ist, der zu dieser Sohnschaft gehört, und der die Wirklichkeit dieser Sohnschaft im Menschen so zum Aufleuchten bringt, dass der Mensch sich als Kind Gottes wissen kann und auch als Kind Gottes leben darf."



385

to isolate conversion-initiation into neat stages. For him, the Spirit is the sine qua non for being a Christian (cf. Gal. 3.2-5, 14; Rom. 7.6; 8,2). According to Rom. 8.9, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of him." If the Spirit brings about adoptive sonship, and a man cannot be a Christian without the Spirit, then it is apparent that the sort of distinction suggested by Stalder between the divine act which makes a man a son and the man's awareness of sonship is erroneous. Just as there is one essential criterion for whether a man is a Christian, there is one for whether he is a son of God, and it so happens that the criteria are the same: does he have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of adoption?

It has sometimes been suggested that a full stop should be read after υἱοθεσίας in vs. 15, thereby connecting vs. 15c with vs. 16. Jeremias, for example, maintains that "the full stop should be put after υἱοθεσίας rather than πατήρ, because otherwise the beginning of vs. 16 would be the first asyndeton in Romans."<sup>1</sup> By placing the period after "adoption," vs. 15c is joined with vs. 16 so that the "Abba" cry becomes the witness of the Spirit to the human spirit, hence the reading of the RSV: "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God . . . ." This rendering makes the ἐν ᾧ of vs. 15c a conjunction (cf. Heb. 6.17); otherwise vs. 15c would suffer from asyndeton. But it seems to us that the ἐν ᾧ should have the meaning "in whom" or "by whom" in light of Gal. 4.6 where the "Abba" cry is said to come from the Spirit of the Son in the believer's heart. Thus the cry "Abba, Father" by the Christian is not connected with the testimony of the Spirit to (or with) his spirit in order to confirm his sonship. Vs. 16 is to be seen as a clarification of πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας and ἐν ᾧ of vs. 15. The asyndeton gives the words of vs. 16 "solemnity and weight," and

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremias, Theology 1, p. 197. Cf. idem, Prayers, p. 65, n. 75; WHmg, RSV, and Dodd, Romans, pp. 128-129 who is following Moffatt's translation. Without committing themselves on the punctuation problem Michel, Römer, p. 261 and Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 164 offer explanations which presuppose the logical connection of vs. 15c with vs. 16.

perhaps even suggests that the thought has sprung out of Paul's emotions.<sup>1</sup> Before going on to vs. 16, however, we must offer a few observations on vs. 15c, though the reader is reminded that we have already discussed the meaning of κράζειν and Ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ in connection with Gal. 4.6.<sup>2</sup>

The divine sonship which the Spirit establishes in the life of the Christian is characterized by the fact that the Christian, by means of the Spirit (ἐν ᾧ), invokes God as his Father (vs. 15c). More than this, he addresses God with the same intimate designation "Abba" used by the earthly Jesus, the Son of God. The preservation of the Aramaic, "Abba," even among Greek speaking Christians, indicates that an intentional connection was made in the early church between Jesus' form of address to God and the address used by Christians. According to Paul the invocation of God as "Abba Father" was only possible by the Spirit who effected adoption. The juxtaposition of vs. 15b with vs. 15c suggests that the adoption effected by the Spirit is not to be seen primarily in legal terms, but as the institution of a real sonship relationship, one modeled on Jesus' own Sonship relation with God. That Paul later on in Rom. 8 speaks of the conformity of Christians to the image of the Son of God (vs. 29) perhaps confirms that he intends vs. 15 to be seen in terms of the conformity of believers to Christ's Sonship in relation with God. After all, it is the Spirit of the Son (cf. Rom. 8.9; Gal. 4.6) who effects the adoption and enables the unique address of God as "Abba Father." Thus we may say that believer's sonship is completely dependent upon Christ's Sonship both in its origin and in regard to its content.

The idea expressed in vs. 15c apparently contrasts with the earlier statement about "returning to fear" in vs. 15a. The person who has received the Spirit of adoption and is empowered to cry to God "Abba Father" lives in dependence upon God, as God's child, and therefore has no fear (Angst) of God.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>On these two points see Blass-Debrunner-Funk, sect. 462 and 463.

<sup>2</sup>See supra, pp. 346-347.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, pp. 240-241 and Grundmann, "Der Geist der Sohnschaft," p. 179.



## 4. Rom. 8.16

We have already suggested that vs. 16 helps to clarify "the Spirit of Adoption" and "by whom" in vs. 15. The crucial question in interpreting vs. 16 relates to how the verb *συμμαρτυρεῖ* should be rendered. The subject of the verb, "the Spirit himself" naturally refers to the Spirit who works adoption and enables the Christian to cry "Abba, Father" from vs. 15. But in what sense does this Spirit "*συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν*" that we are the children of God? The word *συμμαρτυρεῖν* originally meant "'to bear witness with' 'to attest or confirm something as one witness along with another or several witnesses'" and eventually came to mean "to confirm" a statement of another.<sup>1</sup> Paul only uses the word three times and all of these are in Romans. In Rom. 2.15 Paul writes, "*οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν, συμμαρτυροῦσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως . . .*" This verse is problematic in several respects, but with reference to *συμμαρτυροῦσης*, the associative dative is lacking and therefore must be supplied from the context or the participle must be rendered simply as "testify" or "attest" and αὐτοῖς, understood as the indirect object of the verbal idea, must be supplied.<sup>2</sup> In Rom. 9.1-2 Paul uses a very similar expression to 2.15 when he writes: "*οὐ ψεύδομαι, συμμαρτυροῦσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεώς μου ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, ὅτι λύπη μοί ἐστιν μεγάλη . . .*" Here Paul abstracts his conscience from himself so that his conscience confirms what he says with his mouth. Because of the two possible renderings of the *συμμαρτυροῦσης* phrase in 2.15 it cannot be said that we have a definite Pauline usage in respect to whether the word means "to testify with" or "to testify to."

The chief problem with taking τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν as the associa-

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<sup>1</sup>H. Strathmann, "ἐπιμαρτυρέω, συμμαρτυρέω, κτλ.," TDNT 4, pp. 508-509.

<sup>2</sup>On these two alternatives cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 53 and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 162.

tive dative of the verb συμμαρτυρεῖ in Rom. 8.16 arises when it is recognized that the human spirit only knows that it is a son of God through the work of the Spirit. As H. Strathmann observes: "Does it not finally amount to the fact that the Spirit of God confirms Himself?"<sup>1</sup> R. Jewett answers yes, and then says that we must accept "the logical difficulties in conceptualizing this in modern terms."<sup>2</sup> He maintains that Paul

can differentiate the apportioned spirit from its source by means of the possessive pronoun (τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν); it is given into a man's possession so that although it does not lose its divine nature it is nevertheless autonomous enough to be able to make a witness which stands over against the witness of the Holy Spirit."<sup>3</sup>

Jewett has seen the implication of taking συμμαρτυρεῖ as "confirm" or "testify with," and has given it a forceful exposition. The only question is whether or not Paul had such a complicated understanding in mind. It is possible that Paul was simply careless in his formulation of vs. 16, writing out the statement without stopping to ask how the human spirit had knowledge of sonship. Much more probable, however, is the view that he used συμμαρτυρεῖ in the sense of "to testify to," the τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν being used as the indirect object and the ὅτι clause indicating the content of the testimony.<sup>4</sup> The point then becomes that the Spirit ever again (note the present tense of the verb) testifies to the inner man that he is a child of God. The continuance of this testimony of the Spirit explicates the words "you received the Spirit of adoption." It makes clear that the same Spirit who effected adoption at the time of conversion continues to testify of the sonship he has instituted in the life of the Christian. The importance of this ongoing testimony emerges when it is realized that the suffering faced by Christians in this present life flies in the face of their belief that they are the

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<sup>1</sup>Strathmann, "συμμαρτυρέω," p. 509. Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 203 overlook this point in their explanation of vs. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Jewett, Anthropological Terms. p. 199.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 199. Cf. Schlatter, Gerechtigkeit, p. 266.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Strathmann, "συμμαρτυρέω," p. 509; Leenhardt, Romans, p. 215; Kuss, Römerbrief 2, p. 606; Schmidt, Römer, p. 142, and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 403. Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 254 correctly notes, "Das Kompositum ersetzt in der Koine häufig das Simplex."



sons of God.

The <sup>ε</sup>ὅτι clause of vs. 16 gets Paul back to the line of argument he wishes to pursue. Paul does not seem to distinguish between the terms υἱοὶ θεοῦ and τέκνα θεοῦ when applied to Christians. Thus when he identifies the testimony of the Spirit in vs. 16, he says virtually the same thing as he had said in vs. 14b, except that he has shifted from the third person to the more vivid and personal first person. Vss. 14-16 have served to establish one primary fact: Christians are sons of God in the present through the work of the Spirit, and know themselves to be sons through the leading and testifying of the Spirit.

#### 5. Rom. 8.17

The reason for the apostle's interest in sonship comes to the fore in vs. 17 when he asserts, "εἰ δὲ τέκνα, καὶ κληρονόμοι." The εἰ indicated an assumed fact: "since we are children of God, then we are heirs." Paul quickly proceeds to define this new category of heirship and does so in relationship to God, "heirs of God" and Christ, "fellow heirs with Christ."<sup>1</sup> In effect, Paul moves from the present experience of sonship to its future implications: divine sonship in the present is a guarantee of heirship from God in the future. The ζήσεσθε of vs. 13b therefore is defined in terms of divine sonship in the present which assures the believer of future salvation as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. Von der Osten-Sacken is thus correct in seeing a connection between vs. 13b and vs. 17 and in suggesting that Paul achieves the goal of his thought in vss. 14-17 in vs. 17b: "Die Christen sind Söhne Gottes und als solch (doch erst) Anwärter auf das Leben, weil ihre Anteilhabe am

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<sup>1</sup> R. Tannehill, Dying and Rising with Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology (1967), p. 113 notes that "συγκληρονόμοι δὲ χριστοῦ is formulated as a conscious parallel to "κληρονόμοι μὲν θεοῦ . . . and τέκνα θεοῦ." In each case the genitives are of possession or relationship, and therefore συγκληρονόμοι . . . χριστοῦ should be translated as "Christ's fellow heirs." Since Paul only uses the σύν-prefix with κληρονόμοι in relation to Christ and not God "the prefix expresses association with the one indicated by the genitive" and not the relation of believers to one another. This is an important point for it effectively invalidates the view which Hester, Inheritance, p. 65, n. 1 attributes to P. Hammer, The Understanding of Inheritance in the New Testament (Dissertation, Heidelberg) (1958), pp. 118, 120 that συγκληρονόμοι . . . χριστοῦ indicates Christ is the inheritance itself.

Eschaton Miterbschaft mit Jesus Christus ist."<sup>1</sup> In other words, Paul uses sonship to point forward to the eternal life which awaits the Christian as the heir of God and the fellow heir of Christ. Christ himself has already entered into the inheritance (cf. vs. 11); the Christian looks forward with great eagerness to his full entrance into the inheritance. This, as we shall see, becomes the theme of vss. 18ff., but we shall wait until vs. 17 is discussed more thoroughly before examining its relation to what follows.

The theme of heirship has previously been encountered in our study of Galatians. In Paul it only occurs in Gal. 3 and 4 and Rom. 4 and 8. Gal. 3 and Rom. 4 correspond in that both are concerned with heirship in relation to Abraham. But unlike Gal. 3, where the heirship of Abraham gives rise to the discussion about heirship to God in Gal. 4, Paul makes no connection between the heirship to Abraham in Rom. 4.13ff. and heirship to God in Rom. 8. Rom. 8.17 is most like Gal. 4.7, but the differences in formulation are striking, reflecting the differing purposes of the arguments in Gal. 4.1-7 and Rom. 8.12-17. In Gal. 4.7 Paul seeks to emphasize the freedom that sonship entails from former slavery, and that as sons of God, his readers are now heirs. He does not say heirs of God and fellow heirs of Christ, however, as in Rom. 8.17. Instead he says heirs  $\delta\iota\alpha\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  to underscore the origin of the salvation condition of heirship in God and that God himself has made Christians to be heirs. The content of the inheritance remains unexpressed, but since it is heirship to God it includes sharing in everything which is God's. When Paul relates Christians to Christ as fellow heirs in Rom. 8.17, he takes the theme of heirship forward a step. Joint heirship with Christ represents the logical concomitant to sharing in the divine Sonship which belongs properly to him; but as the latter part of vs. 17 maintains, being a fellow heir of the Son of God entails suffering.

Being an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ is not with-

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<sup>1</sup>Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 135-136. See also pp. 137-139. Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 162-163 who maintains, "Paul is interested in sons as heirs . . . , and in sonship as a relationship which guarantees future salvation, and is established in the present through the Holy Spirit, who anticipates the future . . . ." See also p. 164.



out cost. The εἴπερ of vs. 17c does not interject a condition, but like the εἰ at the beginning of the verse, indicates an assumed fact.<sup>1</sup> To be an heir of God means to suffer, not alone, but with Christ (συμπάσχομεν) the joint heir who has already shown the way in suffering. Suffering with Christ in the present leads ultimately to glorification with him (συνδοξασθῶμεν). As R. Tannehill explains, "Suffering, which in itself would be evil, is not alien to present Christian existence, but is being used by God to work his purpose of glorification."<sup>2</sup> The suffering which Christians experience is certainly not to be limited to "suffering for the faith" in the sense of persecution, but includes the suffering involved in the struggle against sin and the flesh (cf. Rom. 7.14-25),<sup>3</sup> the suffering which results from knowing what is to be but being unable to bring it about (cf. vss. 18-25), and finally the suffering of death before entering into life. This becomes the believer's share in the suffering which God's Son has experienced in bringing salvation (cf. Phil. 2.6-8). But such suffering has the purpose of leading to glorification with Christ. The profundity of this thought can only be appreciated when it is remembered that glory is of the essence of God. To be glorified with Christ is to receive a share in God's very nature, to be conformed to the image of the Son of God (cf. vss. 29-30), to share the family likeness of God. Sin robbed men of this (Rom. 3.23), but God gives it back to them as part of his legacy for his sons. This is to say that the inheritance which the sons of God are to receive, along with the Son of God, is the glory of God. In the concatenation of God's acts on behalf of his elect in vss. 29-30 his glorifying of his elect is made the final goal of his saving activity; the purpose to which predestining, calling, and justifying his people leads.

The inheritance with Christ, understood as sharing in his

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, pp. 164-165; Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 407; and Michel, Römer, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> Tannehill, Dying and Rising, p. 114. He expounds vs. 17c in terms of the theme "dying and rising with Christ" and further points out in relation to the theme of suffering "that through suffering the Christian is kept from trust in the flesh and forced to rely on God alone." See also the discussion of Hester, Inheritance, pp. 94-96.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 151 who comments on Phil. 3.10, a verse which, along with 3.11, reads like Paul's own commentary on

glory, which comes from the Father, provides the substance of what Paul wished to say by the ζήσεσθε of vs. 13b. In vss. 18-30 Paul elaborates upon what he has already said in vss. 14-17, but especially vs. 17 which was the goal of the statement in vss. 14ff., so that Von der Osten-Sacken is not far off the mark when he maintains:

Man wird deshalb als Thema des ganzen Abschnittes Röm. 8, 14-30 formulieren können: Die vom Geist bestimmten Gottes-söhne sind Miterben Christi. Literarisch gesehen ist damit nicht V.18 die These, die im folgenden expliziert wird, sondern V.17b: συγκληρονομοι δε χριστου, ειπερ συμπασχομεν ινα και συνδοξασθωμεν.<sup>1</sup>

The connection of vs. 17bc with vss. 18-30 is seen quite clearly by the continuation of the theme of suffering in hope of glory in vss. 18-25 and the fact that vss. 29-30 end with the salvation destiny of the elect depicted as conformity to the image of God's Son, their fellow heir, and as glorification.

#### G. Sonship and the Future: Rom. 8.18-30

In vs. 18 Paul takes up the twin ideas of present suffering and future glory which he had brought into the discussion of vs. 17 in order to explain the significance of being a fellow heir of Christ. This actually represents a return to a theme first introduced in 5.2-5 where Paul spoke of "boasting in the hope of the glory of God" and "boasting in tribulations." Through a catena of statements in 5.3-4 he argued that it is tribulation which ultimately works hope in the believer, hope which cannot disappoint, "because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given to us" (vs. 5). Significantly, vss. 17c and 18ff. expatiate on the ideas found in 5.2-5, as Paul attempts to give a fuller explication of the theme of present suffering and future glory. The need for this exposition

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Rom. 8.17c: "The conformity with the sufferings of Christ implies not only the endurance of persecution for His name, but all pangs and all afflictions undergone in the struggle against sin either within or without. The agony of Gethsemane, not less than the agony of Calvary, will be reproduced however faintly in the faithful servant of Christ."

<sup>1</sup>Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 139. (He uses no accents or breathing marks when quoting Greek.) Cf. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 404-405 who connects vs. 17 with vss. 18-30 rather than accepting the more usual link between vss. 14-16 and vs. 17. While it is right to emphasize vs. 17's connection with vss. 18-30, it must also be seen



is inevitably raised by conflict between the salvation promised in Christ and the realities of this present age of suffering and death.<sup>1</sup>

# 1. The Structure of Rom. 8.18-27

It is widely held that Rom. 8.18-30 forms a main section in chapter 8,<sup>2</sup> but the breakdown of this unit into its constituent parts has led to several different analyses. Perhaps the most common scheme of analysis sees vs. 18 proposing a thesis of sorts, or simply giving a theme, which is then supported through three closely reasoned statements: a) vss. 19-22 concern creation; b) vss. 23-25 concern Christians; and c) vss. 26-27 concern the Spirit.<sup>3</sup> Käsemann sees these as three concentric circles narrowing

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in its relation to vss. 14-16, for which it forms the goal of the thought expressed in them.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Kuss, Römerbrief 2, p. 619 who maintains in connection with vss. 18-30: "Es meldet sich hier wieder ein zentrales Problem paulinischer Theologie: Wie kann man denn begreifen, dass das Heil da ist, wenn der Glaubende nun doch immer noch in einer offenbar feindlichen, Schwierigkeiten, Drangsale, Leiden, Tod verursachenden Welt leben muss?" A. Vögtle, "Röm 8, 19-22: Eine schöpfungstheologische oder anthropologisch-soteriologische Aussage?" Mélanges Bibliques en hommage au R.P. Béda Rigaux (1970), p. 354, apparently following up a suggestion of Käsemann [see idem, "The Cry for Liberty in the Worship of the Church," Perspectives on Paul (1971), p. 125] maintains that the question formulated by Kuss (whom he quotes) was first raised by early Christian enthusiasts, presumably because they felt a tension between possession of the Spirit and present suffering. It probably did not take "enthusiasts" to realize that a tension existed between present suffering and the promised future glory. This tension was built into the "already and not yet" of salvation as preached by Paul.

<sup>2</sup>E.g. H. Schlier, "Das, Worauf Alles Wartet: Eine Auslegung von Römer 8, 18-30," Interpretation der Welt. Festschrift für Romano Guardini zum Achtzigsten Geburtstage (1965), pp. 599-616; U. Gerber, "Röm. viii 18ff als exegetisches Problem der Dogmatik," N T 8 (1966), pp. 58-59; Vögtle, "Röm 8, 19-22," p. 355; Käsemann, Römer, pp. 219-234; Kuss, Römerbrief 2, pp. 619-620; and Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 217ff. Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, pp. 139-144 thinks 8.14-30 constitutes a single paragraph, and Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 403ff. views 8.17-30 as a single section.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the references in the preceding note with the exceptions of Vögtle, Von der Osten-Sacken, and Leenhardt. See also Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 33-34 and Paulsen, Römer 8, pp. 107-109.

down to the cry of the Spirit for freedom, in the Church's worship.<sup>1</sup> H. Balz, who is followed by J. Baumgarten, offers a very detailed analysis of the three units contained in vss. 19-27:

Die drei Gedankengänge von V. 19ff sind deutlich gegliedert. Dem γάρ (V. 19) entsprechen ἀλλὰ καί (V. 23) und ὡσαύτως καί (V. 26). Jeder dieser parallelen Gedankengänge enthält einen einleitenden Hauptsatz mit einer die These von V. 18 stützenden Aussage (V. 19 . . . ; 23 . . . ; 26 . . . ). Jeder dieser Aussagen wird selbst mit einem nachfolgenden γάρ begründet und entfaltet (V. 20. 24. 26b). Alle diese Begründungen werden mit einem zusammenfassenden Satz abgeschlossen [vss. 22, 25, 27], der zeigt, dass der aufgewiesene besondere Zustand einen bestimmten phänomenalen Wirklichkeit (κτίσις/ἡμεῖς/τὸ πνεῦμα) eine Hinweis- und Erwartungscharakter hat.<sup>2</sup>

While at first sight this constitutes an impressive formal analysis of the thought progression of vss. 19-27, Balz has oversimplified matters. He claims that the ἀλλὰ καί of vs. 23 corresponds to the γάρ of vs. 19, and therefore he assumes that vs. 22 concludes the preceding section and that vs. 23 commences a new one. This is a commonly held view, but it obscures or ignores altogether the relation of vs. 22 to vs. 23. The ἀλλὰ καί of vs. 23 does not correspond to the γάρ of vs. 19 because it is part of the linking construction "οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καί" which joins the thought of vs. 23 to that of vs. 22. The "οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καί . . ." must be understood as an ellipsis for, "and not only does creation groan and suffer labor pains, but also . . ."<sup>3</sup> If vs. 23 supports the statement in vs. 18, as it does, should not vs. 22 offer similar support for vs. 18 in as much as Paul is talking about two related phenomena in vss. 22-23? But what then of the relation of vs. 22 to vss. 19-21? It is undeniable that vs. 22 is conceptually related to vss. 19-21 since creation is the subject of both. Furthermore the ἡ ἀποκαταδοκία . . . ἀπεκδέχεται of vs. 19 suggests that

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, "Cry for Liberty," p. 132. Cf. Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 33-34

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 33-34. Cf. Baumgarten, Paulus und Apokalyptik, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup>The unity of thought between vss. 22 and 23 is especially emphasized by the study of W.D. Stacey, "Pauline Certainties: II. God's Purpose in Creation—Romans viii. 22-23," ET 69 (1957-58), pp. 178-181.



595

creation has a heightened sense of expectation. This probably implies that creation senses the nearness of the final act of salvation. Vs. 22 seems to pick up this idea by indicating that creation is already groaning and experiencing the labor pains caused by the impending birth of the coming salvation condition (or new age).<sup>1</sup> This may be understood as the anguish and travail preceding the freedom creation will experience in the freedom arising from the glorification of the children of God (vss. 20-21). But when vss. 19-21 are examined together, the imminence of the revealing of the sons of God is not the focus of attention. As we shall see, Paul wants to emphasize the greatness of the salvation which will come to believers in order to support his claim that present suffering is not worthy of comparison to the future state of glory (vs. 18).<sup>2</sup>

We would suggest that vs. 22 should be seen as elaborating an idea implicit in vss. 19-21, but making a different point, in relation to vs. 18, from the one made in vss. 19-21. If this is correct, it means the argument of vss. 19-27 cannot be understood in terms of the concentric circles mentioned by Käsemann since Paul's interest in creation and in the sons of God is not so neat as to allow for a simple division between vss. 22 and 23.

## 2. Rom. 8.18

In vs. 18 Paul utilizes an apocalyptically oriented schema which contrasts the present with the future (cf. 4 Ezra 7.10-18), though he does not define the present simply in terms of "the present evil age" (cf. Gal. 1.4), nor does he speak of the future age as such. Instead he operates with a very personalized conception of present and future. "ὁ νῦν καιρὸς" is qualified as the time in which the faithful followers of Christ experience the same sort of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 263 on the connection of vs. 22 with vs. 19.

<sup>2</sup>On this cf. Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 141. He recognizes that vs. 19 confirms vs. 18 by documenting the greatness of the glory to be apportioned, but he then denies that anything more than vs. 19 grounds the statement of vs. 18. This is because he misunderstands the point of vss. 19-22 asserting that "Paulus . . . in Röm. 8 das Verhältnis der Schöpfung zum Schöpfer mittels einer grundlegenden Kategorie seiner Rechtfertigungslehre auslegt" (p. 102). Von der Osten-Sacken is not alone in seeing Paul's primary interest in vss. 19-22 in terms of "creation's redemption." Cf. for example, Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, pp. 34-41; Käsemann, Römer, pp. 222ff.; and Gerber, "Exegetische Problem," pp. 58-81. See

suffering which he experienced during his earthly life. The word παθήματα of vs. 18 corresponds to the συμπάσχομεν mentioned in vs. 17. These sufferings are an extension of the suffering first experienced by Christ. In a similar way the apostle speaks of the coming blessings of salvation as "τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς." The εἰς ἡμᾶς indicates that something more is at issue than glory to be revealed to believers since the simple dative ἡμῖν would have sufficed for that purpose. Paul is concerned with the future salvation in which Christians actually participate, experiencing the glory of God as fellow heirs of Christ. This then corresponds to the συνδοξασθῶμεν of vs. 17. The use of μέλλουσαν in conjunction with the aorist infinitive ἀποκαλυφθῆναι, even though separated by the word δόξα, indicates that the revelation is imminent: the glory is about to be revealed.<sup>1</sup> Paul has completely personalized the original apocalyptic schema of the two ages in vs. 18 in order to establish what he considers to be the crucial fact about the present and the future as far as the Christian is concerned.<sup>2</sup> The fact is that the present sufferings experienced by Christians are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory which is to be revealed in and for the Christian (cf. 2 Cor. 4.17). Paul cannot prove this; only when the glory is revealed will it be proven that Christians were justified in enduring the sufferings peculiar to their existence in Christ.<sup>3</sup> He nevertheless supports his contention in

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Baumgarten, Paulus und Apokalyptic, p. 172 on the causes of this distortion of the text.

<sup>1</sup>Arndt-Gingrich, "μέλλω," p. 502.

<sup>2</sup>C.F.D. Moule, "The Influence of Circumstance on the Use of Eschatological Terms," JTS 15 (1964), pp. 11 comments regarding Rom. 8: "A majestic eschatology is unfolded which is essentially non-apocalyptic. I know that in fact the actual words ἀποκαλυφθῆναι and ἀποκάλυψις do occur (vv. 18f.); I am well aware also that the cosmic, and not only a human perspective enters in (vv. 19ff.). But the values throughout the chapter are personal values and are expressed in terms, not of myth and apocalypse, but of personal relationship—especially sonship."

<sup>3</sup>W. Michaelis, "πάθημα," TDNT 5, p. 934 correctly notes of the suffering in vs. 18: "Afflictions here are those which necessarily arise from the antithesis between the Christ event and the nature of this aeon." Dunn, Jesus and Spirit, p. 332 describes the suffering mentioned in vs. 17, and therefore vs. 18 as well presumably, as "the Messianic woes." The Christian suffers as a part of the death throes of the present age. In this he shares in the Messianic woes experienced by Christ.



the verses which follow, while giving hope and confidence to his readers.

### 3. Rom. 8.19-21

The first support for the statement in vs. 18, expressing Paul's conviction in the supreme worth of the future salvation, is found in vss. 19-21. The γάρ of vs. 19 relates it to vs. 18 as an element of support for the thesis put forward there. Paul claims in vs. 19 that creation expectantly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.<sup>1</sup> The long-debated question of whether Paul refers only to subhuman creation, or creation including man, or creation including extrahuman entities such as angels, demons, and so on, need not concern us here. The real intent of what Paul wishes to say in vs. 19, as well as its supporting verses, concerns the content of what the creation eagerly expects: the revealing of the sons of God. In the words of A. Vögtle, "Röm 8. 19-22 will höchstwahrscheinlich nicht als schöpfungstheologische sondern als anthropologisch-soteriologische Aussage verstanden werden."<sup>2</sup> This is to some extent confirmed by the fact that Paul does not explicitly make creation the recipient of the longed-for revelation; rather, as he goes on to argue in the verses which follow, creation hopes to gain freedom from the "slavery of corruption" when the revelation comes. However, it is indicative of the greatness of the coming glory to be revealed in and for the believers (vs. 18), that creation itself awaits eagerly for this to happen. The importance of the

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<sup>1</sup>G. Bertram, "Ἀποκαταδοκία," ZNW 49 (1958), pp. 264-270 tries to make the case that ἀποκαταδοκία in vs. 19 has a negative content on the basis of prefix ἀπό-. His point is that creation looks forward to the revelation of the sons of God with anxious (angstlich) longing because of the burden it carries (see esp. p. 269). It is unclear, however, in what sense the expectation might be accompanied by anxiety or nervousness, unless doubt existed regarding the thing expected. Such a thought would actually work against the goal of Paul's statement. Schlier, *Römerbrief*, p. 259 hesitantly suggests that Paul chose ἀποκαταδοκία to avoid the more personal and confident idea of ἐλπίς in light of the reference to the whole creation. Vs. 20 casts doubt on this explanation, however, since there Paul does use ἐλπίς in respect to the creation.

<sup>2</sup>Vögtle, "Röm 8, 19-22" p. 366. Cf. Professor Barrett, *Romans*, p. 165.

idea of sonship throughout vss. 12-30 comes to surface again in vs. 19, because Paul appears to equate the "coming glory to be revealed in and for us" of vs. 18 with the revelation of the sons of God in vs. 19. The believers' participation in the glory of Christ, the Son of God, becomes a revealing of their status as sons of God, something which they alone know in the present through faith and the witness of the Spirit, but which all will know when God completes his saving work.

The statement in vs. 19 receives clarification in vss. 20-21 as Paul explains why creation waits with eager expectation and what this has to do with the sons of God. Paul's interest in creation, even in vss. 20-21 where the creation itself seems to be in the foreground, is completely determined by his anthropological and soteriological concern. He begins with the assertion that creation was subjected to futility or purposelessness. Bultmann claims to find an allusion to a Gnostic mythology of the fall of creation here,<sup>1</sup> but he gives no evidence to substantiate his claim. It is much more probable that Paul is dependent upon a traditional Jewish idea regarding the disruption of creation caused by the sin of Adam, an idea which goes back to Gen. 3.17.<sup>2</sup> According to Paul, creation was subject to futility, οὐχ ἔκοῦσα, but on account of him who subjected it. In spite of the controversy in the past over who subjected creation, this is undoubtedly a reference to God's activity. Implicit in the thought of God's subjection of creation without its willingness, or perhaps more accurately without its willful involvement in the matter, is the fact that creation's subjection to futility was based upon God's response to man's willful sin. Creation suffers on account of man's sin, not on its own account. Thus its restoration to purposefulness and harmoniousness can only take place when man himself is restored and no longer suffers the punishment of God against his sins. For this reason Paul says creation was subjected "in hope."

Verse 21 provides an expression of the content of the hope

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<sup>1</sup>Bultmann, Theology 1, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>Davies, Paul, pp. 38-39 and Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 41ff.



of creation: ὅτι<sup>1</sup> καὶ αὕτη ἡ κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται ἀπὸ τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ." C.F.D. Moule thinks it more natural to translate τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης in a semitic fashion as "glorious freedom," rather than allowing δόξα to stand as an independent idea.<sup>2</sup> This makes the translation of the latter part of vs. 21 smoother, but it overlooks the fact that structurally δόξα corresponds to φθορά in the preceding prepositional phrase, and that Paul is concerned in the context specifically with the idea of the glory that believers will possess in the eschatological future. Although one might expect the combination "freed from bondage . . . for . . . ," the harsh tautology created by "freed for freedom" suggests that εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν should be understood as ἐν ἐλευθερίᾳ, a phenomenon quite common in Koine Greek. The point which Paul is making is not, "creation will be freed from bondage to corruption into the freedom belonging to the glory of the children of God," but "creation will be freed from bondage to corruption in the freedom belonging to (or produced by) the glory of the children of God." Creation can only attain freedom from corruption when the children of God, themselves freed from suffering and death, possess the glory which they are to share with Christ in the eschatological future.

Paul is not, as Käsemann suggests, concerned with "Heil für die gefallene und stöhnende Welt."<sup>3</sup> Rather, he seeks to explain why creation eagerly awaits the revealing of the sons of God (vs. 19), in order to establish the greatness of the coming glory which is to be revealed in and for the sons of God (vs. 18). Creation

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<sup>1</sup>The textual tradition varies between ὅτι and διότι. ὅτι represents the reading of the oldest and best witnesses according to Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 517. He thinks διότι arose through dittography, though it might plausibly be argued that ὅτι arose through haplography. ὅτι makes better sense in the context and since in the case of dittography the principle of lectio difficilior does not necessarily apply, the ὅτι reading is to be preferred. Cf. Vögtle, "Rom 8, 19-22," p. 359 and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 262. Michel, Römer, p. 268 argues for διότι and then understands the verse as though it read ὅτι since in the Hellenistic period διότι was sometimes used for ὅτι.

<sup>2</sup>Moule, Idiom-Book, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup>Käsemann, Römer, p. 224.

eagerly awaits the revealing of the sons of God because only then will it be freed from the bondage to corruption which has affected it since the transgression of Adam. While this does not prove that glory will come to believers, it does argue that the present sufferings of Christians are a small matter compared to the glory that they will receive. The whole creation will be affected by the liberation which proceeds from the glory which they are to gain. In light of this, there can be no doubt that Paul's attention is fixed on the sons of God in vss. 19-21. The eager expectancy of creation is introduced exclusively to support Paul's contention about the greatness of the salvation that the sons of God will share with Christ after their sufferings are completed.

#### 4. Rom. 8.22-25

The relation of vs. 22 to its context has been treated in some detail already, so we may concentrate on expounding the verse and its function. In vs. 22 Paul maintains that the whole creation is groaning and suffering birth pains together until the present. The imagery of a woman in labor pains to describe a distressing situation was common in Antiquity among both Greeks and Jews, and in the Rabbinic literature, in particular, it was associated with the travail ushering in the Messianic age.<sup>1</sup> In connection with the thought of coming salvation the groaning and suffering of labor pains mentioned in vs. 22 probably suggests two things: 1) the "birth" of final salvation (or the coming age) is close at hand;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 52-54 and G. Bertram, "ὤδιν, ὤδινω," TDNT 9, pp. 667-672. Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 416, n. 2 observes, "The metaphor is a very natural one to express the thought of severe distress from which a happy and worthwhile issue is to be looked for."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Schlatter, Gerechtigkeit, p. 274; Baumgarten, Paulus und Apokalyptik, p. 176; and Vögtle, "Röm 8, 19-22," p. 361. Vögtle asserts: "Wenn das In-Geburtswehen-Liegen 'bis zum Jetzt' andauert, so ist damit vom Bild der Geburtswehen her gesagt: das Ende des Seufzenmüssens steht bevor; das Kommen des Heils kann nicht mehr lange auf sich warten lassen." Davies, Paul, p. 37 claims that Paul is thinking in vs. 22 of the "account of creation given in Genesis as the counterpart of the new creation in Christ." This is reading a foreign idea into Rom. 8.22 because the thought of vss. 19-21 does not suggest "new creation" but renewal of creation to its original purpose.



and 2) like labor in a woman, there is no stopping the process now that it has begun. The words οἶδαμεν γάρ indicate that Paul is introducing a conception, whose truth is well-known and indisputable, in order to support his previous assertion (cf. Rom. 7.14 and 2 Cor. 5.1). The idea of the present birth pains of creation preceding the advent of final salvation, which Paul assumes to be familiar to his readers, may be related to such sayings of Jesus as Mk. 13.8 where the signs of the end are given: "Nation will arise against nation, kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places and famines; these are the beginning of labor pains (ὡδίνων)" (cf. Mk. 13.25-27; Mt. 19.28).

The phrase "until now" (ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν) does not reflect the long ages in which creation suffered in bondage, but probably includes only the time between the death of Jesus and the present (for Paul the time of his writing), for this is the period of Messianic woes preceding the arrival of complete salvation for the elect, and the freeing of creation from bondage, at least according to Pauline reckoning.<sup>1</sup> This explanation of the phrase "until now" is confirmed by vs. 23. Paul correlates the possession of the Spirit as the first fruits of salvation with the groaning which anticipates final redemption. The Spirit was only sent in the wake of the Christ event, and likewise the groaning for final redemption by the sons can only be understood as possible after the saving work of Christ. The parallelism between vss. 22 and 23, suggested by their connection through the words "and not only, but also," means that vs. 22 refers to the time between the death of Christ and his parousia just as vs. 23 does.

The knowledge of the present state of creation with respect to its labor pains before the arrival of final salvation should assure the believer of the imminence of his own glorification with Christ. This in turn makes the endurance of present suffering more bearable. Thus Paul's assertion about creation in vs. 22 is directed towards confirming Christian hope as expressed in vs. 18.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Michel, Römer, p. 269 and Vögtle, "Röm 8, 19-22," pp. 361-362.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. ibid., pp. 363-365; Baumgarten, Paulus und Apokalyptik, p. 176; and Schlier, "Das, Worauf alles Wartet," p. 606.

The relation of vs. 22 to vs. 23 has already been dealt with. The nature of the link existing between the two verses means, in all probability, that the two verses are intended to make the same basic point, namely the nearness and certainty of the salvation for which the Christian hopes. The analysis of vs. 23 and vss. 24-25, which are joined to it, will confirm this supposition.

In vs. 23 Paul asserts, "We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, while eagerly awaiting the adoption, which is the redemption of our bodies." The emphatic construction "αὐτοί . . . ἡμεῖς καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς στενάζομεν" makes for an awkward translation, but it underscores the completely personal character of the groaning mentioned in the verse, in contrast to the groaning of creation in vs. 22. Käsemann and Balz think that the ἐν ἑαυτοῖς should be interpreted as meaning "unter uns" because they believe that the context, particularly vss. 26-27, show that Paul is speaking about something which happens in the divine worship of the community.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not vss. 26-27 should be seen in this light, it seems doubtful that vs. 23 should be. Nothing in vss. 18-22 or 24-25 suggests, let alone requires, seeing these verses in the context of divine worship. In the case of vs. 23 a "communal groaning" seems to be unlikely by virtue of what is longed-for and on account of the probable nature of the groaning itself. The "final state of adoption, the redemption of the body," is in its very essence a personal experience for which the Christian longs as an individual.<sup>2</sup> It follows from this that Paul intended the groaning to be understood in a similar fashion as the groaning of individuals "within themselves."<sup>3</sup> The likely cause of the groaning virtually assures our interpretation. In Paul's mind, why do Christians groan? Is it

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, Römer, pp. 226-227 and Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 57, 91-92.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Professor Barrett, Romans, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup>Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 418-419, n. 2 who accepts this rendering, points out that this does not forbid the outward expression of this groaning. Michel, Römer, p. 264 and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 265 render the expression in question "im Blick auf uns selbst" apparently in order to avoid an overly internalized conception of the groaning ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.



not because they are suffering in the present, while they await their coming glorification? The inward groaning is the result of the present suffering of Christians who live between the death and resurrection of Christ and the coming age when salvation will be completed. Thus the "groaning" of vs. 23 is to be understood in terms of vs. 18. To suggest that Paul referred to a "communal groaning in worship" is to miss the real and profoundly personal experience to which he refers in vs. 23.

One further point may be made against the interpretation of Käsemann and Balz. If Paul had wished to express the idea of communal groaning, groaning "unter uns," then we would have expected him to repeat the compound form "συστενάζειν" from vs. 22, but he does not. This suggests that he does not have a corporative activity in mind.

The experience of groaning by the Christian is connected with an important fact of the present and points forward to a future experience of fundamental significance for Paul. The present fact is that Christians have the ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος. Paul nowhere else apposes the words "first fruits" and "Spirit," but it is common to see a close connection between "the first fruits of the Spirit" and the expression "τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος" in 2 Cor. 1.22 and 5.5 (cf. Eph. 1.14). Käsemann, for one, thinks that they are synonymous;<sup>1</sup> however, a slight distinction between the two ideas, at least as they are used in Rom. 8.23 and the two passages in 2 Corinthians, is to be observed. Both 2 Cor. 1.22 and 5.5 emphasize that God is the giver (ὁ δοὺς) of the down payment or pledge which consists in the Spirit, but Rom. 8.23 refers to the Christian "having" (ἔχοντες) the first fruit of the Spirit. In 2 Corinthians ἀρραβών stresses the Spirit as a gift which is received as a first installment or guarantee of salvation, whereas ἀπαρχή in Rom. 8.23 looks to the actual work of the Spirit, in those who have the Spirit.

The question of how "τοῦ πνεύματος" is to be taken with the term "first fruits" in vs. 23 is of significance. Exegetes divide over whether it is a partitive genitive or an epexegetic (or apposi-

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<sup>1</sup>Käsemann, Römer, p. 226. Cf. Lietzmann, Römer, p. 85.

tive genitive.<sup>1</sup> The context favors the partitive genitive with τοῦ πνεύματος understood as a reference to the work of the Spirit. Paul has already given the Spirit a decisive role in effecting the sonship relation which the believer has with God and assuring him of that relation (vss. 14-16). But he has also said that the Spirit of God will play a role in making "the mortal body" alive in the resurrection (vs. 11). Thus the Spirit has produced the first fruits of salvation in the Christian, but he still has further work to accomplish in the believer at the resurrection. When vs. 23 is viewed from this perspective, the adoption, which is correlated with the redemption of the body in the latter part of the verse, is seen as the completion of the work which the Spirit has already begun.

In verse 23 the future experience of Christians is conceived as an extension and completion of their present experience. With respect to the thought of vss. 18ff., the first fruit of the Spirit, which consist of the sonship relation with God worked by the Spirit, becomes a pointer to and an assurance of the future work of the Spirit which will lead to complete salvation. The present groaning of Christians results from the tension between what is and what will be. Having already experienced the first fruit of sonship, it is small wonder that Christians should eagerly await the completion of sonship wherein their bodies shall be redeemed from corruption, mortality, and death (cf. 1 Cor. 15.42-53). The inner experience of sonship will then extend to the outward appearance of men, for the υἱοθεσία, or redemption of the body, for which Christians eagerly await, is their future share in the glory of Christ (vs. 17).<sup>2</sup> But to share in Christ's glory is to be conformed to his image since the essence of his image is the glory which he has from the Father

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<sup>1</sup>Among those seeming to favor the partitive genitive are Arndt-Gingrich, "ἀπαρχή," pp. 80-81; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 209; Lietzmann, Römer, p. 85; and G. Delling, "ἀπαρχή," TDNT 1, p. 486, n. 17. Those favoring an epexegetic or appositive genitive include Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, p. 418; Käsemann, Römer, p. 226; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 264; and Michel, Römer, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Jervell, Imago Dei, p. 277 and Balz, Heilsvertrauen, p. 58.



(cf. vs. 29).<sup>1</sup>

When vs. 23 is viewed in this light, the Pauline conception of believer sonship takes on a profound dimension. It represents a decisive element in the continuity between present and future. It is a salvation good which is already possessed and lived out, but at the same time, it is one which does not and cannot attain complete fulfillment until the resurrection. Sonship is not only an inward experience, a real and living relation with God in the present, effected by the Spirit; it also will have an outward manifestation in that the children of God are to share in the glory of the unique Son of God, to be conformed to his image in the resurrection. It is this for which creation longs, for this is what the "revelation of the sons of God" consists in (cf. vss. 19, 21).<sup>2</sup>

Although Paul has not used the word "hope" in relation to Christians in vss. 18-23, the theme of Christian hope permeates the passage. Vss. 22 and 23, are dominated by the idea of hope as Paul attempts to give hope to Christians who live with the tension and distress caused by their incomplete experience of salvation in an alien and hostile environment. The hope which he desires to impart concerns the certainty of final salvation and its imminence. The essential thought of vs. 23, in relation to vs. 18, involves the fact that believers have experienced the first fruit of salvation and therefore wait for its completion with hope. Thus Paul writes in vs. 24: "For we were saved in hope."<sup>3</sup> Von der Osten-Sacken

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<sup>1</sup>Both Dunn, Baptism, p. 150 and Jervell, Imago Dei, pp. 278-280 see a connection between vs. 23 and vs. 29. Jervell maintains: "Was nun die Christusgleichheit [of vs. 29] besagt, drückt Paulus zunächst durch Negationen aus. Christusgleich wird der Mensch erst, wenn er völlig erlöst ist. Deshalb heisst Christusgleichheit ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος, V. 23" (p. 278). He goes on to say, "Positiv ausdrückt, heisst Gottebenbildlichkeit oder Christusgleichheit, die υἱοθεσία zu bekommen, V. 23, 29" (p. 279). As we have seen, however, Jervell is wrong when he understands adoption as completely future.

<sup>2</sup>On the relation of vs. 23 to vss. 19 and 21 see Thüsing, Per Christum, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup>J.G. Gager, "Functional Diversity in Paul's Use of End-Time Language," JBL 89 (1970), p. 329 describes these words of vs. 24 as attempts to reconcile the "already" and the "not yet."

propounds the view that "das Resümee der Verse 24f. den Charakter einer Korrektur hat, ohne die die Aussage V. 23 für Paulus nicht tragbar wäre."<sup>1</sup> Put more precisely, he thinks that the "groaning expectation" of vs. 23 required the correcting force of the words "awaiting eagerly with patience" in vs. 25b. His understanding of the role of vss. 24-25 seems to be determined by the fact that he sees vss. 23 and 26-27 as a traditional piece which Paul has taken up.<sup>2</sup> Since, according to Von der Osten-Sacken, vss. 24-25 are inserted into the traditional material, he seems to assume that they must correct some unacceptable feature of the tradition. The discussion of hope in vss. 24-25, however, appears merely to make explicit the theme of vss. 18ff., while the statement about waiting with patience, already prepared for by 5.2-5, indicates that patience is the concomitant of hope. Vs. 25b does not correct vs. 23; it simply clarifies the nature of Christian hope. It is eager waiting for God's salvation with patience, so that hope is not swallowed up by despair as the waiting continues for longer than anticipated.

#### 5. Rom. 8.26-28

Not only does the Spirit work the first fruits of salvation in the sons of God; according to vss. 26-27, he takes an active role in helping the saints in their weakness, by interceding on their behalf before God.<sup>3</sup> As creation groans (vs. 22) and the sons

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<sup>1</sup>Von der Osten-Sacken, Römer 8, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup>See ibid, pp. 97-100.

<sup>3</sup>The longstanding debate over whether or not vss. 26-27 refer to the phenomenon of Spirit-inspired speaking in tongues (see especially Käsemann, "Cry for Liberty," pp. 127-137) should probably be answered in the negative. In support of this assertion see Professor Cranfield, Romans 1, pp. 421-424; K. Niederwimmer, "Das Gebet des Geistes, Röm. 8, 26f." TZ 20 (1964), pp. 263-264; Michel, Römer, pp. 272-273; and Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 269. It should be said against Käsemann and others, e.g. Baumgarten, Paulus und Apokalyptik, p. 177 and E. Gaugler, "Der Geist und das Gebet der schwachen Gemeinde," Internationale Theologische Zeitschrift 52 (1961), pp. 67-94, that it is far from clear that vss. 26-27 relate to the Christian community as such and not to the individuals within the community. The whole of chapter 8 seems to be concerned with individual persons and their religious experience rather than the communal side of Christianity.



groan (vs. 23), awaiting freedom and redemption respectively, so the Spirit makes unspoken (or unspeakable) groans (στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις). But the purpose of the Spirit's groaning is different from the groaning of creation and the sons of God. These groans on their own account for final salvation and freedom, but the Spirit groans in order to intercede on behalf of the sons before God. He aids the saints in their fleshly weakness (cf. Gal. 4.13), in their inability to pray for what is required in light of the distress and tensions which characterize their lives (cf. 2 Cor. 12.9). The point which Paul is making in vss. 26-27 is simply that the sons of God are not left on their own in the time of their suffering (vs. 18). The Spirit who effected sonship (vss. 14-16) and who will be working in the redemption of the body (vs. 23, cf. vs. 11) is active in communication between the sons and God. Because of this the children of God may have confidence that their lives are under the immediate care of God who knows their needs through the intercession of his own Spirit.

Vs. 28 follows from this. The people of God know with certainty that all things work for their good—even suffering (vs. 18), tribulation, distress, persecution, danger, the sword, and so on (vs. 35)—because God cares for his elect, those who respond to him with love, and therefore he directs all things for the ultimate well-being of his own. The sufferings and troubles of this present time actually work to accomplish the saving purpose of God for the individual. Thus vs. 28 provides one more item to instill confidence in the children of God who experience suffering while waiting for glorification (vss. 17c, 18).

#### 6. Rom. 8.29-30

The thought of vs. 28 leads to vss. 29-30 where Paul brings to a conclusion the whole thought progression from vs. 12 onward. From the perspective of this thesis vss. 29-30 are extremely interesting because Paul makes explicit the relation of Christians, as the children of God, to Christ the unique Son of God—they are brothers. But Christ is the image to whom all the children of God are conformed so that he may have priority among all the brethren (vs. 29).

It is unnecessary to present a detailed exegesis of vss. 29-

30 here because we have already examined them closely in conjunction with our study of Christ's Sonship in part one of this thesis.<sup>1</sup> There it proved impossible to discuss Christ's Sonship and its significance in Rom. 8.29 without considering what was said about those whom God foreknew and predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. As a result of this, we may simply reiterate the principal findings of our previous examination of vss. 29-30 making special reference to the thought connections between vss. 12-28 and vss. 29-30. This will then bring to completion our examination of the believer sonship theme in vss. 12-30 and in Romans.

Vss. 29 and 30 are probably intended to support the statement made in vs. 28. They appear to provide a reason for believing that God cares for his elect and in all of the vicissitudes of life continues to work his saving purposes. Vss. 29-30 form a sorites in which Paul begins with the foreknowledge of God about those who shall be saved and concludes with the assertion that they shall be glorified. Into the sorites Paul inserts the words "συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς." It is this which makes vs. 29 of such special interest for our purposes. This insertion, following after the word προώρισεν, expresses the final destiny which God has appointed for his saints. In the sorites itself God's saving activity, which includes justification, has for its final goal the glorification of the elect (cf. vss. 17c, 18, 21). There is no contradiction between the conclusion of the sorites and the insertion into it because to be conformed to the image of the Son of God is synonymous with being glorified. But, as we have seen previously, conformity to the image of the Son of God has both present and future significance. In the present it concerns an inward conformity. This conception is made possible because the εἰκών of something is an outward manifestation of its inner essence. If Christians are to be conformed to the εἰκών or outward appearance of Christ, if they are to share in the glory which is characteristic of his outward appearance (cf. 2 Cor. 4.4, 6), in the resurrection, then they must be made to conform to his inner essence, and this is what is happening in the present. Christ is the εἰκών of God, the visible manifestation of God, because he is

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<sup>1</sup> See supra, pp. 207ff.



the Son of God. In other words, as we have seen previously, Christ's possession of the imago Dei is closely connected with his Sonship relationship to God; it is an outward expression of his Sonship relationship with God. That the elect of God have already become sons of God through the work of the Spirit (vss. 14-16) represents the initial step in the process of conformity to the image of the Son of God. This inward transformation precedes their outward transformation and includes a number of other changes such as the "putting to death of the deeds of the body" (vs. 13); the renewal of the mind in the knowledge of God and his will according to Christ, the image of God (Col. 3.10, cf. 2 Cor. 4.16-17); and the process of transformation from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3.18). The inward conformity to the image of the Son of God is probably to be understood in terms of Christ dwelling in the believer through his Spirit (Rom. 8.9-10); that is, the first fruits of the Spirit (vs. 23) are to be associated with the inward process of conformity with the image of Christ, the Son of God.

In the future, at the resurrection, the inward conformity of the children of God to the Son of God will become manifest in outward conformity. As the εἰκών of Christ is characterized by glory, so shall the εἰκών of the children of God who are to share in Christ's glory (vss. 17-18). When Paul asserts that the children of God eagerly await their adoption, the redemption of their bodies, in vs. 23, he refers to their desire for outward conformity as the children of God, to the image of the unique Son of God. But the sonship of the children of God remains secondary to that of Christ the Son of God. He is himself the image of God and not, as the other sons of God, an image of the image of God. For this reason he is the firstborn among the brethren, in the sense that he holds the position of preeminence.

Vs. 29c, which speaks of Christ as the firstborn among many brethren, draws the logical conclusion regarding the Sonship of Christ and the sonship of believers: they are brothers. This is the only place in Paul where this relation is made explicit, but vs. 17 which describes Christians as the "heirs of God and fellow heirs of Christ" clearly presupposes this relation between the Son of God and the sons of God. This is not simply to be identified as a statement of Christ, the Son of God, as the Last Adam, for the brotherhood motif does not fit well with that thought. It is a

related but separate conception in which Paul works out the implications of the two strands of sonship: Christological Sonship and believer sonship. In the process he has raised believer sonship and its attendant features to the status of a bridging conception which holds together the present and future aspects of salvation, while providing an immediate and unique connection with one of the more important features of his Christology, namely, the divine Sonship of Christ. In conjunction with Rom. 8.3 (cf. Rom. 8.32) the theme of sonship in Rom. 8.12-30 becomes an example of the interchange conception which M.D. Hooker has spoken of: Christ the Son of God became a man so that men might become sons of God.<sup>1</sup> That Paul can make brotherhood with Christ, and therefore sonship to God, an ultimate expression of the salvation destiny to which God has appointed his elect indicates how dynamic and important a conception sonship was in his theological reflection.

#### H. Conclusion to Part Two

Having completed our exegetical examination of the principal texts in the letters of Paul where the divine sonship of Christians is discussed, we may now attempt to present a concise statement concerning the apostle Paul's conception of non-Christological divine sonship and its significance in his thought.

In ascribing the status of divine sonship to Christians, Paul was taking up an idea found in the Old Testament and post-Old Testament Judaism in relation to the people of God. Paul, as an Israelite, believed that the privilege of adoptive sonship originally was the exclusive prerogative of Israel. In Rom. 9.4 he gives it pride of place among the privileges granted to Israel by God. In doing so he appears to have gone beyond the normal Jewish understanding of the significance of divine sonship. Only Wis. 11-19 offers anything like a similar emphasis on Israel's sonship relation with God. The rank which Paul gives to sonship in Rom. 9.4-5 is perhaps indicative of the significance he came to attach to the idea as a Christian. But the privilege of sonship as given by God did not guarantee that every Israelite entered into the relation. Paul claims that God had

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<sup>1</sup>Hooker, "Interchange," pp. 354-355, though it is not a perfect interchange, for Jesus does not cease to be Son of God and the sons of God do not cease to be men.



always worked a process of election among the descendants of Abraham and Israel (Jacob), and therefore physical descent from the patriarchs was not an exclusive guarantee of a sonship relation with God. Even among the offspring of Abraham, only the children of promise, those whom God foreknew and predestined to sonship, entered into the relationship (Rom. 9.6-13). But Paul believed that the original sonship prerogative of Israel was to be shared with those who were not physical descendants of the patriarchs, and he found in Hos. 1.10 Scriptural proof for this: God also called the Gentiles to share in sonship.

Though Paul's conception of the divine sonship of believers was based on the granting of the privilege to Israel and God's subsequent inclusion of non-Israelites in the sonship relation, Paul's understanding of sonship appears to have been conditioned by the Gospel tradition as well. His use of "Abba, Father" evinces an awareness of the special place this had in Jesus' life and teaching, and his differentiation between the Sonship of Christ and the sonship of believers clearly has its roots in the teaching of Jesus. But one crucial feature of Paul's sonship conception appears to have been his own contribution. Nowhere in Judaism or the Gospel tradition do we find the Spirit of God playing a decisive role in the sonship of God's people. Given Paul's emphasis on the work of the Spirit, however, it is perhaps not completely surprising that he should do so.

The heart of what Paul taught about the divine sonship of believers is to be found in Gal. 3.26-4.7 and Rom. 8.12-30. The limited amount of material involved and the absence of reference to divine sonship in the majority of Paul's letters belies the importance of the idea in Paul's thought. Careful attention to the way in which Paul introduces and uses the sonship conception indicates that the idea formed a standard part of the apostle's teaching and was of major significance in describing the nature of salvation in Christ. As we have seen, the argument of Galatians necessitates the conclusion that Paul had previously taught the Galatians of their divine sonship status and that they understood their Christian experience in terms of their sonship relation with God. Thus Paul was able to demonstrate to them that it was unnecessary for them to become Jews to secure the blessings of salvation since in Christ they were already the sons and heirs of God as well as

the heirs of Abraham.

The use of the divine sonship idea in Rom. 8.12-30 is also of major importance in understanding the place of sonship in Paul's thought. While Romans is not a systematic presentation of Pauline theology, it does represent what was undoubtedly a well-thought-out attempt by the apostle Paul to present the Gospel in written form in order to gain some fruit among the Romans and to prepare for his anticipated visit. The sonship passage in Rom. 8.12-30 forms a sort of keystone to the discussion about new life in Christ in Rom. 5-8. Paul was able to use the believer sonship conception in this way because it was an inclusive idea which related to the spiritual, and ethical quality of the Christian's present and future experience of salvation, while being grounded in the experience of the divine Spirit. In Rom. 8 sonship lies at the center of the believer's personal relation with God who is his Father (8.16), with Christ who is his elder brother (8.17,29), and with the Spirit who mediates the relationship (8.14-16, 23, 26-27).

For Paul, the divine sonship of Christians was determined, from start to finish, by Christ, the unique Son of God. The starting point for Paul's believer sonship conception was God's sending of his Son into human existence to redeem those under the curse of the law, in order that they might become sons of God through adoption (Gal. 4.4-5). At issue here is what Dr. Hooker has called "interchange in Christ": the Son of God became a man so that men might become sons of God. Thus at a fundamental level, the divine sonship of Christians originates in the saving act which only the unique Son of God could accomplish. A person can only enter into the adoptive sonship relation made possible by the Son of God through faith in Christ who is the Son of God. Sonship is thus an experience only available "in Christ" (Gal. 3.26). Sonship is effected and confirmed through the Spirit (Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.15-16), but the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son (Gal. 4.6; cf. Rom. 8.9-10). The goal of sonship in the present and in the future is conformity to the image of the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8.29). In the present it is inward conformity to the Sonship relation of the Son with God—to the mind of the Son and to his obedience—through the work of the Spirit. In the future it will be complete conformity to the image of the Son so that the sons of God will appear in the resurrection



with the glory like the glory of the unique Son of God; they will be like him from the inside out. Even the future inheritance which is promised by God to Christians as his sons and heirs is determined by the unique Son of God who has preëminence among the heirs (cf. Rom. 8.17, 29).

The divine sonship of Christians is both spiritual and ethical in orientation. It is spiritual because divine sonship, for Paul at any rate, is inconceivable without the work of the Spirit in the heart of the believer effecting the new relation with God as Father and assuring the spirit of the believer that he is a son of God against all apparent contradictions to this fact (Rom. 8.15-16; Gal. 4.6). Divine sonship for the Christian is ethical because it entails putting to death the deeds of the body through the help of the Spirit (Rom. 8.12-14); to be a son of God is to have put on the Son of God, Christ, in order <sup>to strive</sup> to become morally perfect even as he is (Gal. 3.26-27).

The exegesis of Gal. 3-4 and Rom. 8-9 has shown that the conception of the divine sonship of believers is interconnected with a number of important thoughts in Paul: Christology (Gal. 4.4-6; Rom. 8.29); Israel (Rom. 9.4-13); the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God (Rom. 9.24-26; Gal. 3.26-29); redemption from enslavement to the law (Gal. 4.5); justification and reconciliation (Gal. 3.23-4.7); the resurrection (Rom. 8.23); the destiny of creation (Rom. 8.18-23); the Spirit (Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.14-16, 23, 26-27); baptism (Gal. 3.26-27); the new moral existence of believers (Gal. 3.26-27; Rom. 8.12-14, 29; Phil. 2.13-15); the present and future experience of salvation (Rom. 8.12-30); the glory of God and Christ (Rom. 8.17-21); the inheritance (Gal. 3.26-4.7; Rom. 8.17); suffering with Christ (Rom. 8.17-18); and conformity to the image of God (Rom. 8.29). In light of these connections, which arose from our exegesis and not from an attempt to systematize Pauline thought, we may say that the believer sonship theme constituted a very important integrative theme in Pauline thought.<sup>1</sup> What would be interesting to know, but would require a great deal more research, is whether or not any other category in Paul's anthropological-soteriological thought was ever used in such an integrated fashion.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. W. Grundmann, "Der Geist der Sohnschaft," pp. 172-192 who sees divine sonship in Paul and the concepts related to it as a "Mittellinie" in Paul's thought.

## CHAPTER XII

### CONCLUSIONS

Through the two parts of this thesis with their differing focuses upon the one theme of divine Sonship in Paul, we have seen that this idea, in both its forms, cannot be relegated to the periphery of Pauline thought. It is unnecessary to reiterate the conclusions we have drawn at the end of part one and the end of part two to make this point. Rather, in concluding this thesis, we may simply point to several of the most important aspects of the two types of Sonship in order to indicate the importance of divine Sonship for Paul.

The designation "Son of God" and its equivalents when used in relation to Christ are not simply titular in nature but relate to the real relationship which exists between God and Christ. The importance of this idea is best judged by the fact that in Paul's thought Christ's divine Sonship is the necessary presupposition for his role in both creation and redemption. At every stage of his existence Christ has been the unique Son of God and has acted in doing God's work because he was and is God's Son. Without this conception Paul's soteriological thought would collapse, and Christ's present role as sovereign of the universe would become inexplicable. In essence then, Christ's divine Sonship is an integrative conception in Paul's Christological and soteriological thought.

That Christians are called sons of God by Paul results from Paul's belief that God sent his Son into human existence to redeem men from enslavement to the law in order that they might become sons of God through adoption. Because the divine sonship of believers embraces their present and future experience of salvation and serves as a focal point to which Paul relates a variety of conceptions in his anthropologically oriented soteriological thought it too must be seen as an integrative idea within Pauline theology.

Together the two-sides of the one theme of divine Sonship serve to draw together some of the most important features of Pauline



thought. That this was accidental seems unlikely. In all probability Paul gave Sonship an important place in his thought precisely because it highlighted the personal character of salvation from a variety of different perspectives as no other conception could. Anyone who wishes to understand Pauline theology in its totality would do well to begin with Paul's belief in the Son and the sons of God.

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420

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440

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